

# STARBLAZER

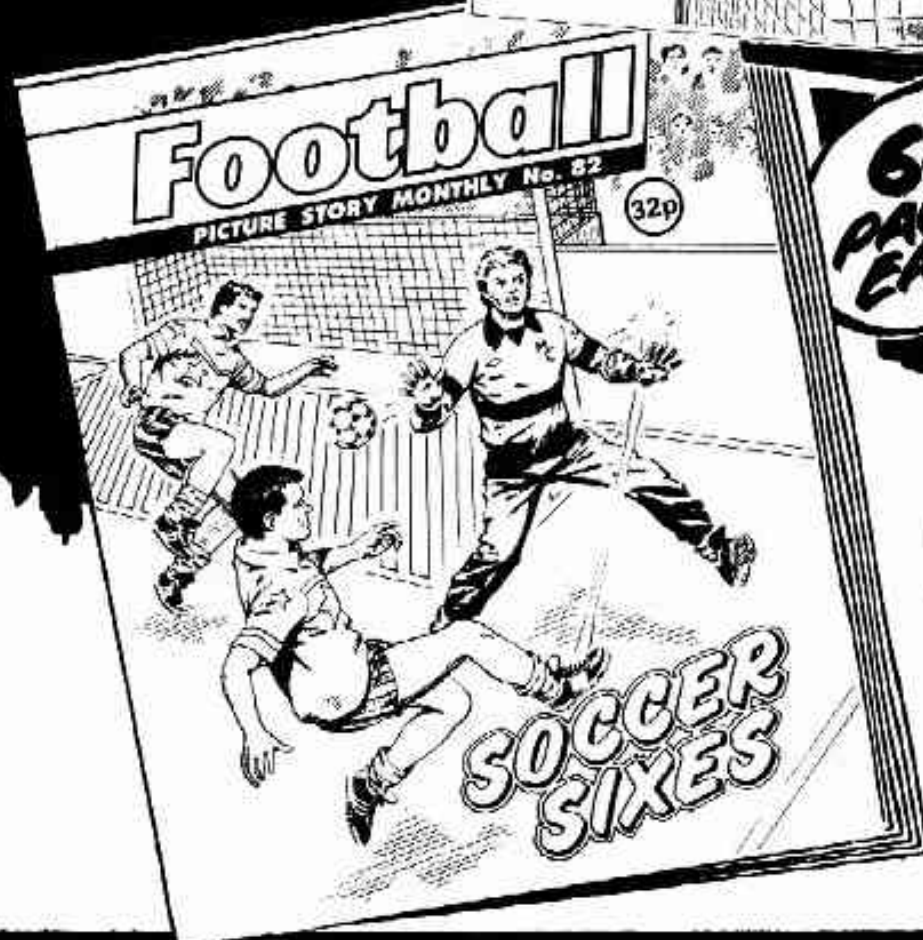
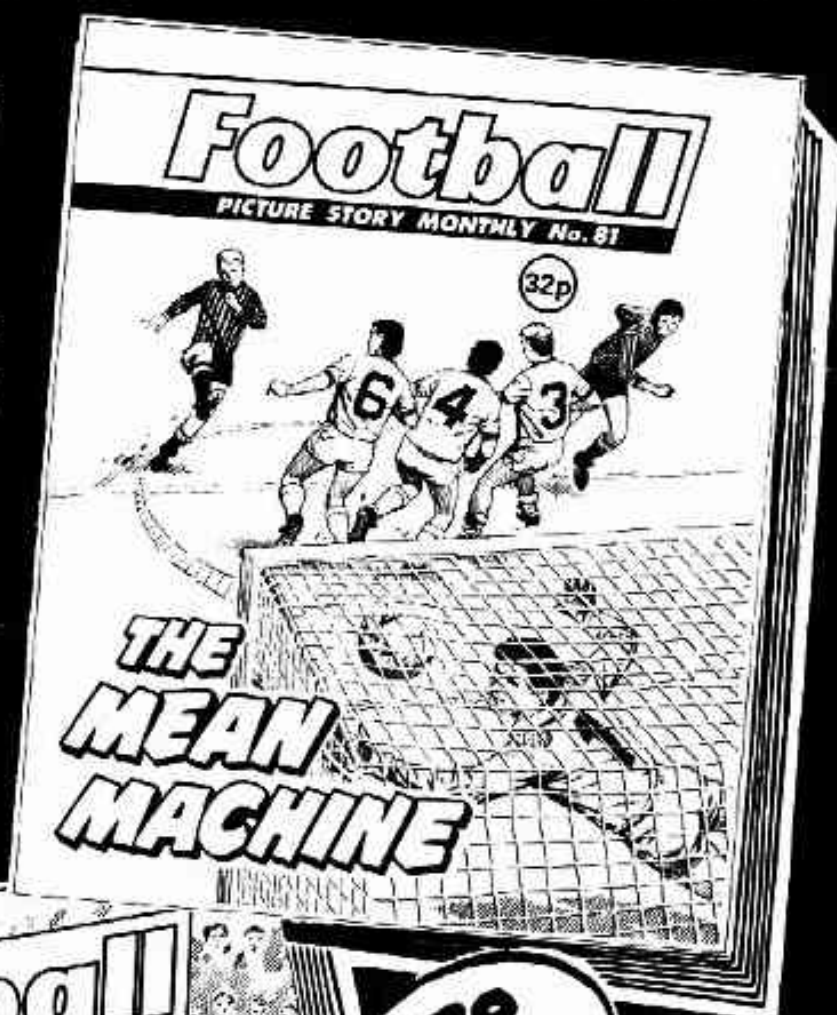
FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES NUMBER 251

32p



SONG OF  
THE SWORD

**IF YOU'RE  
A  
FOOTBALL  
FAN, YOU  
CAN'T  
AFFORD  
TO MISS  
THESE!**



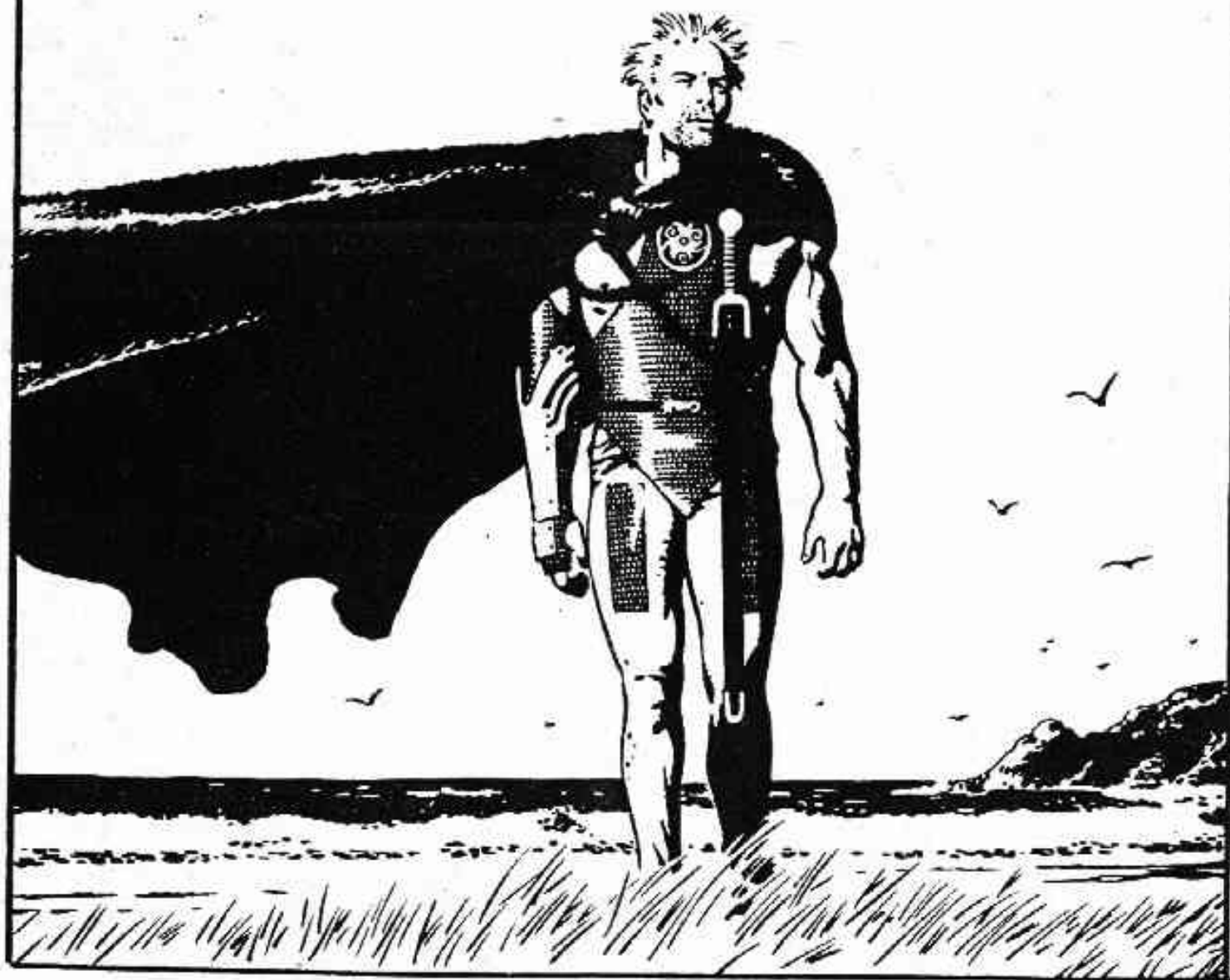
**68  
PAGES  
EACH**

**FOOTBALL  
LIBRARIES  
Nos. 81+82**

**NOW ON SALE 32p**

# SONG *of the* SWORD

THE WAR WAS STILL GOING ON. FOR TWO GENERATIONS PEOPLE HAD KILLED EACH OTHER. THE TOWNS WERE ALMOST EMPTY. THE FIELDS WILD AGAIN, AND THE ROADS DANGEROUS TO WALK... UNLESS YOU WERE A MERCENARY LIKE THORDVIGE, A VETERAN OF A THOUSAND BATTLES.



4  
TROUBLE WAS NEVER FAR AWAY —

CHAAARGE!

OH, MY STARS!



YOU SHALL NOT TAKE ME  
EASILY, SONS OF EVIL.



THE AWESOME, MYSTERIOUS  
BLACK KNIGHTS SWEEP  
DOWN ON THORVIGE.



THORDVIGE WAS MERCILESS —



ANOTHER BATTLE WAS FOUGHT AND WON BY THORDVIGE. HIS ENEMIES, UNKNOWN TO HIM, WERE NOW DEAD.

WHO ARE THESE KNIGHTS? THEY HAVE DOGGED MY EVERY STEP FOR DAYS.



THORDVIGE FELT THAT BAD SPIRITS WERE WITH HIM. HE WAS ALONE WITH THE WIND AND THE EMPTY LAND. IN HIS LONELINESS HE THOUGHT OF HIS DISTANT AND LOST HOME. HIS HOME BEFORE THE KILLING BEGAN.

PAHI I HAVE NO TIME FOR MEMORIES. YONDER INN WILL DO FOR TONIGHT.

THE INN WAS CROWDED. IT WAS A WELCOME SIGHT FOR HIM AFTER THE LONG TRIP FROM THE SOUTH. HIS ARMY HAD LOST THE FINAL BATTLE. HE WAS ALONE... HE HAD NO FRIENDS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS RECOGNISED EVERYWHERE.

SEE WHO'S JUST COME IN? THORDVIGE... THEY SAY HE'S THE WORLD'S GREATEST WARRIOR. BUT HE ONLY FIGHTS FOR MONEY.

THE ALE LIFTED HIS MELANCHOLY AND  
LOOSEMED HIS TONGUE AND HE SPOKE  
TO A HOODED MAN IN A QUIET CORNER.

I WAS BORN IN A LITTLE  
VILLAGE IN THE NORTH. IT  
WAS A HARD LIFE, VERY  
MONOTONOUS. ONE DAY A  
WARSHIP CAME ...

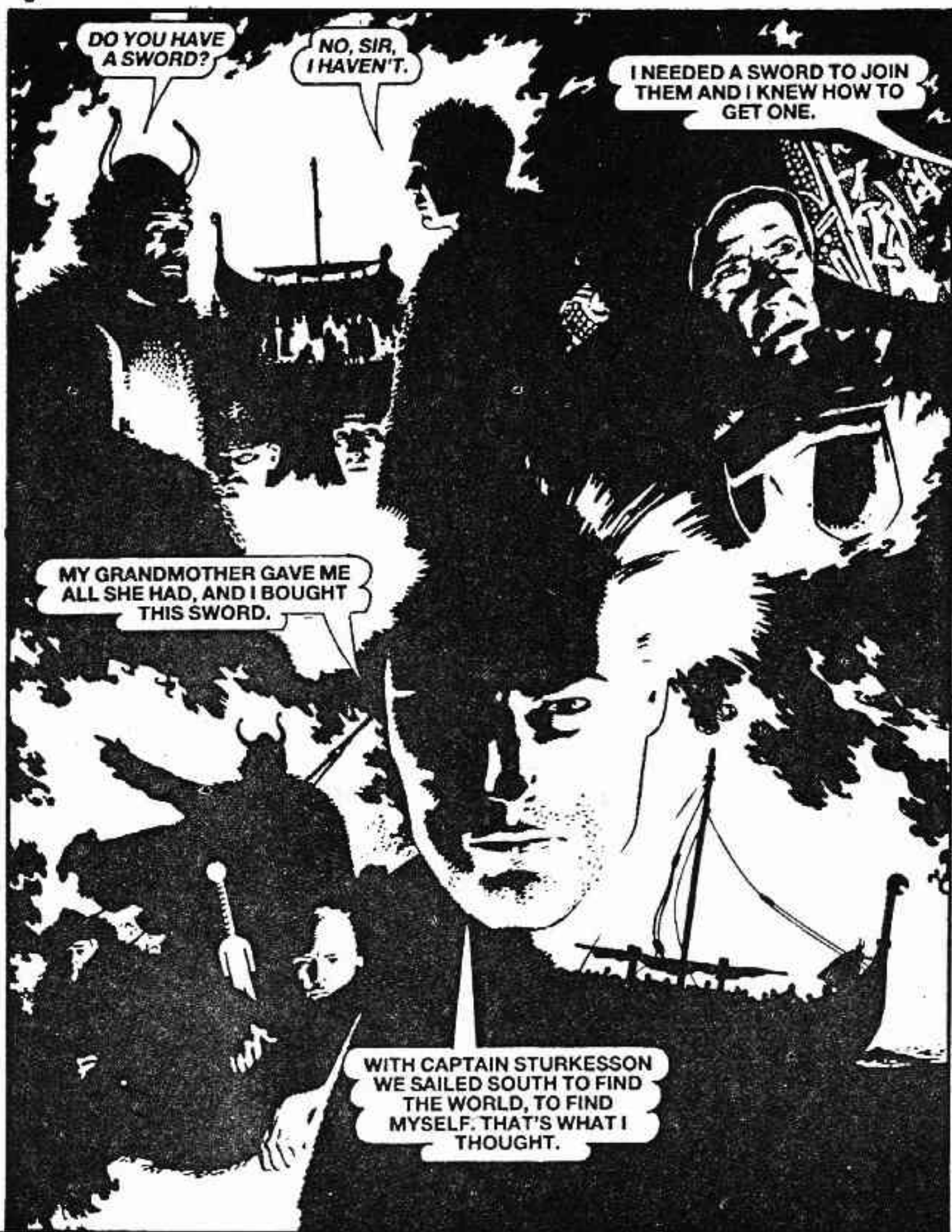


IF YOU WANT TO SEE  
THE WORLD, JOIN US.

THEY PROMISED US ADVENTURE  
AND RICHES. I DECIDED AT THAT  
MOMENT TO JOIN THEM.







DO YOU HAVE  
A SWORD?


NO, SIR,  
I HAVEN'T.

I NEEDED A SWORD TO JOIN  
THEM AND I KNEW HOW TO  
GET ONE.

MY GRANDMOTHER GAVE ME  
ALL SHE HAD, AND I BOUGHT  
THIS SWORD.


WITH CAPTAIN STURKESSON  
WE SAILED SOUTH TO FIND  
THE WORLD, TO FIND  
MYSELF. THAT'S WHAT I  
THOUGHT.





AN INTERESTING TALE,  
WARRIOR. DO YOU WANT  
TO MAKE SOME MONEY?

AYE, I NEED MONEY. WHAT  
DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?



I WANT YOU TO CROSS THE  
SEA TO SNORRE ABBEY AND  
BRING ME BACK A CHALICE.  
IT WILL BE WORTH 500  
GOLD COINS TO YOU!





THORDVIGE KNEW WHERE TO GO — ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS FIND A BOAT TO TAKE HIM.

THIS TASK SEEMS A MITE TOO SIMPLE FOR THE MONEY. I SHALL BE WARY.



HE WAS GOING IN GOOD SPIRITS. HE WAS GOING AWAY FROM THE WAR. THIS WAS FOR HIMSELF — A CHANCE TO ESCAPE.

POOR PEOPLE! ESCAPING FROM THE BATTLEGROUND IN THE NORTH, AND GOING TO THE ONE IN THE SOUTH.



EVEN AS HE STOOD, THE KNIGHTS RETURNED.

BLACK KNIGHTS ... YOU HAUNT ME!









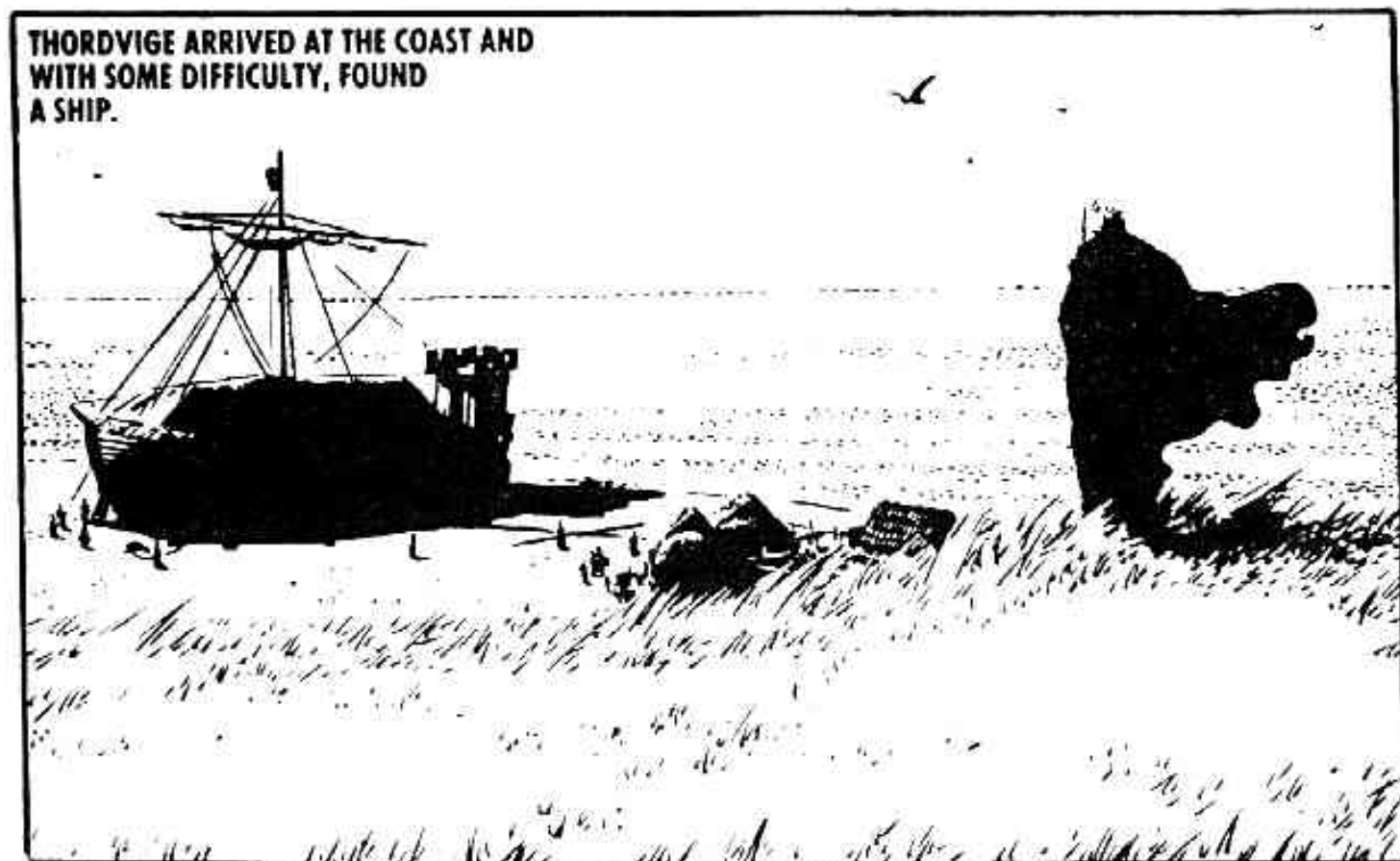
**THE DOWNED KNIGHT SAID  
NOTHING. SLOWLY AND  
DELIBERATELY HE BIT INTO A RING  
ON HIS LEFT HAND.**

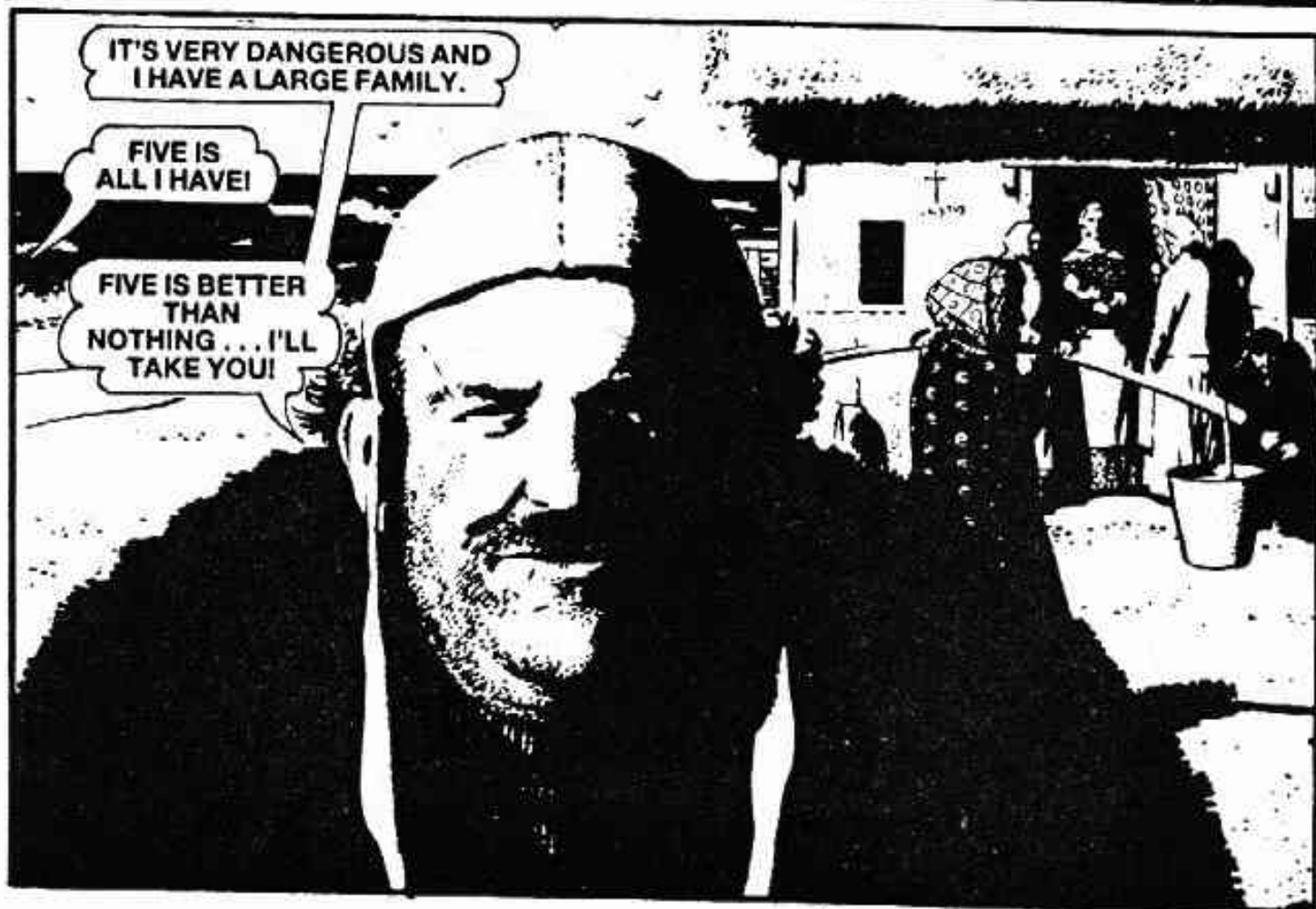


POISON!! HE'D RATHER  
DIE THAN SPEAK — WHY?

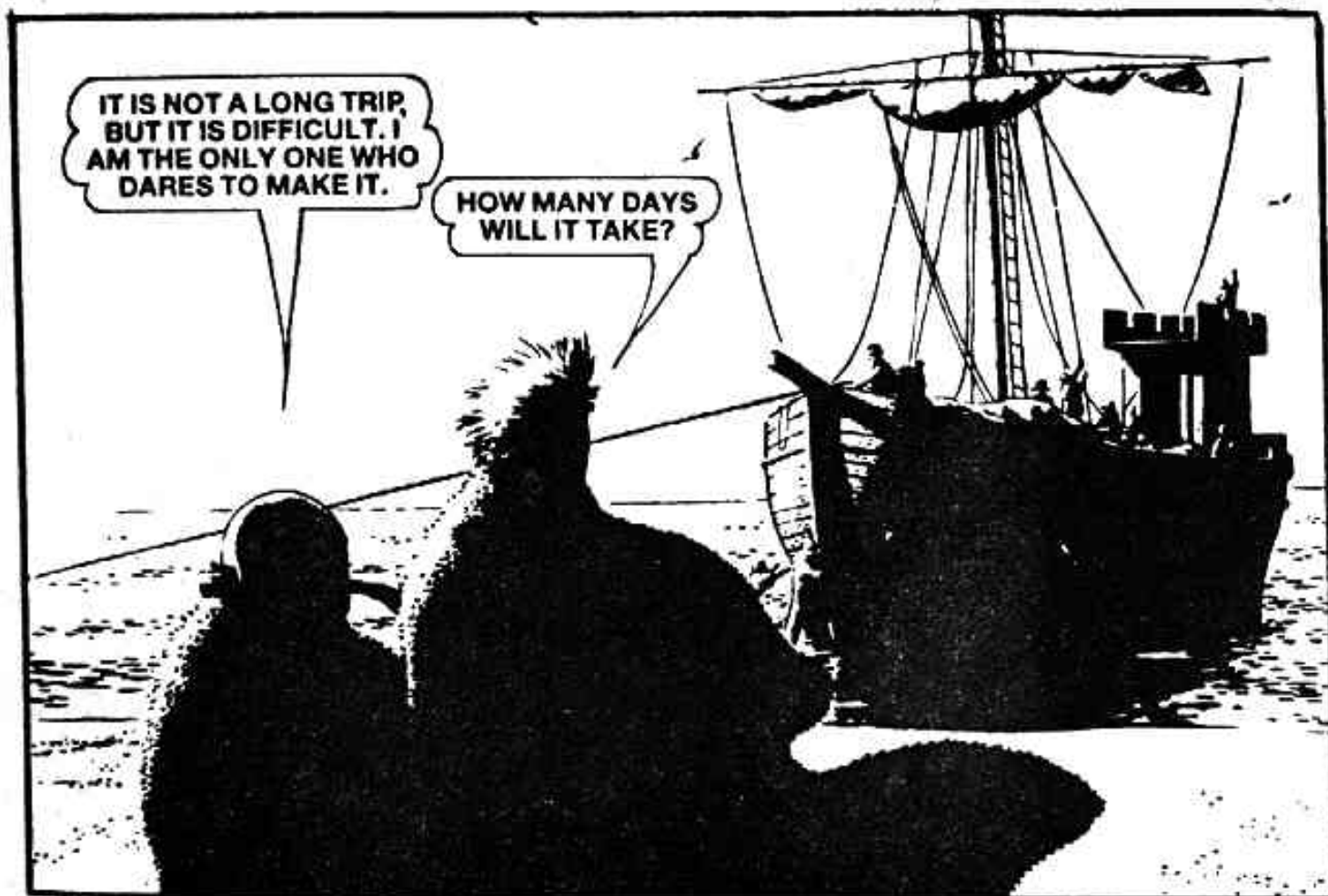



THORDVIGE ARRIVED AT THE COAST AND  
WITH SOME DIFFICULTY, FOUND  
A SHIP.












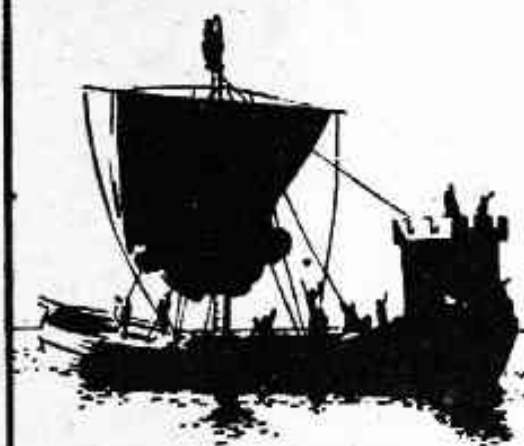
THE MONSTERS, SEA SNAKES  
AND HUGE WHALES, TEN  
TIMES BIGGER THAN OUR  
SHIP. SOMETIMES THEY  
ATTACK US, SOMETIMES  
THEY DON'T!



IT CAN'T BE WORSE THAN  
WHAT I HAVE ALREADY  
BEEN THROUGH. THEY SAY  
YOU HEAR THE CALL WHEN  
YOUR TIME IS UP. I HAVEN'T  
HEARD IT YET.

NO ONE HEARS THE  
CALL OF DEATH.

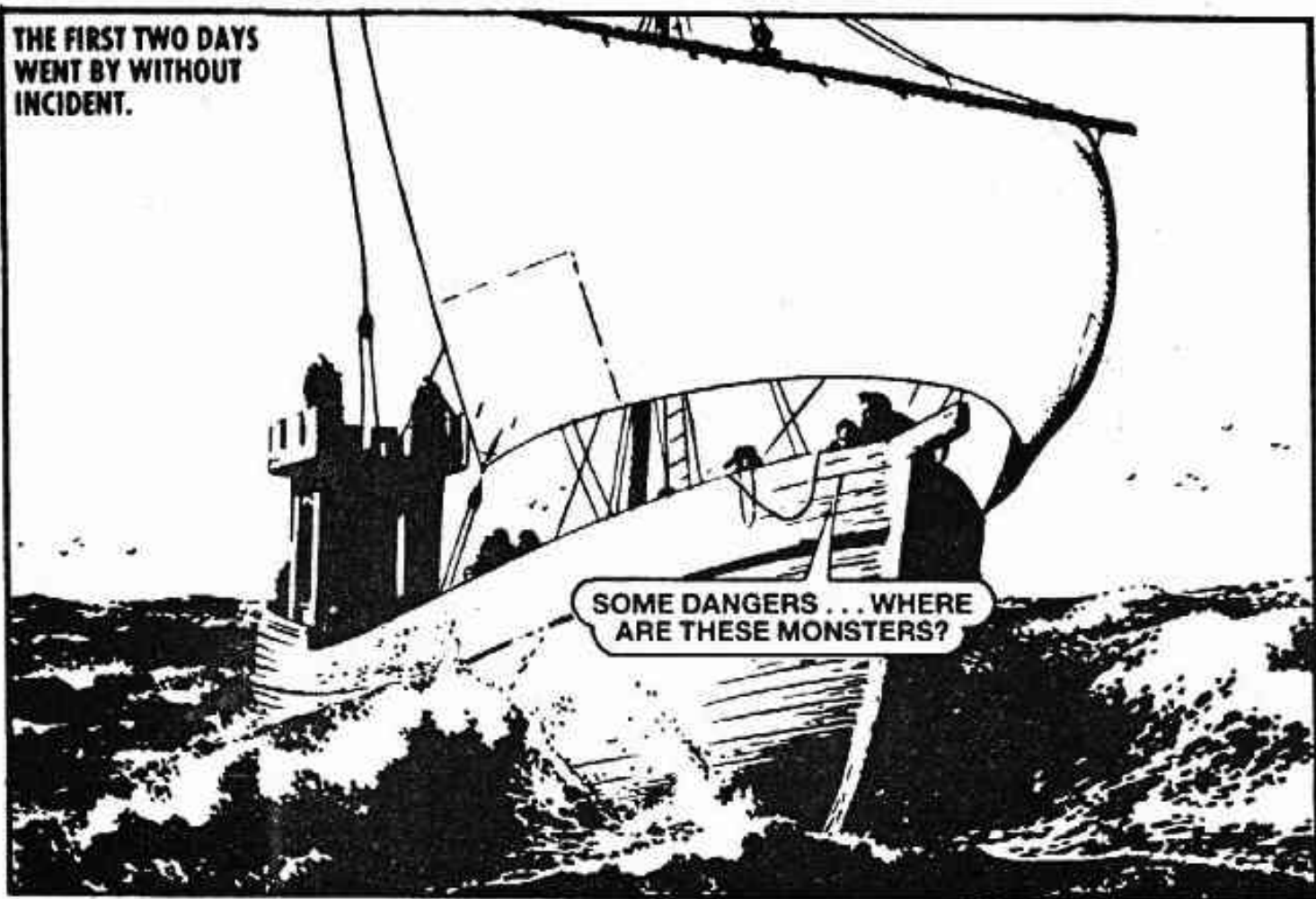
PAHI! OLD WIVES' TALK!



GOODBYE, GOOD LUCK,  
COME BACK SAFE.



THE FIRST TWO DAYS  
WENT BY WITHOUT  
INCIDENT.



DON'T MOCK, STRANGER  
... LOOK!

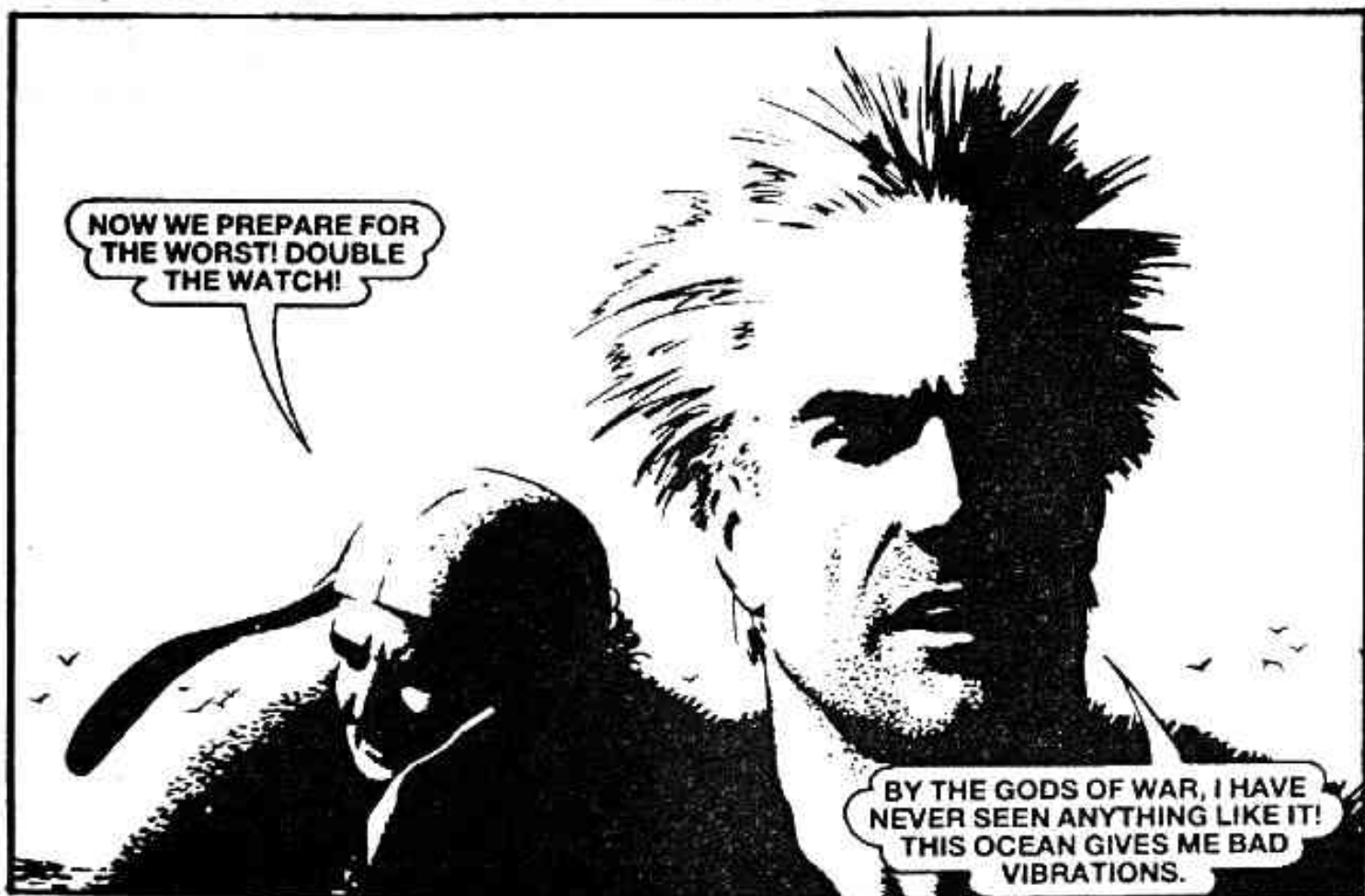
WHAT IS THAT?







THEY ARE OMENS OF  
DOOM. CREATURES  
THAT BRING DEATH.



NOW WE PREPARE FOR  
THE WORST! DOUBLE  
THE WATCH!

BY THE GODS OF WAR, I HAVE  
NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!  
THIS OCEAN GIVES ME BAD  
VIBRATIONS.



THORDVIGE REACHED THE DECK,  
AND WAS SHOCKED.

THORDVIGE!!! HEEELP!

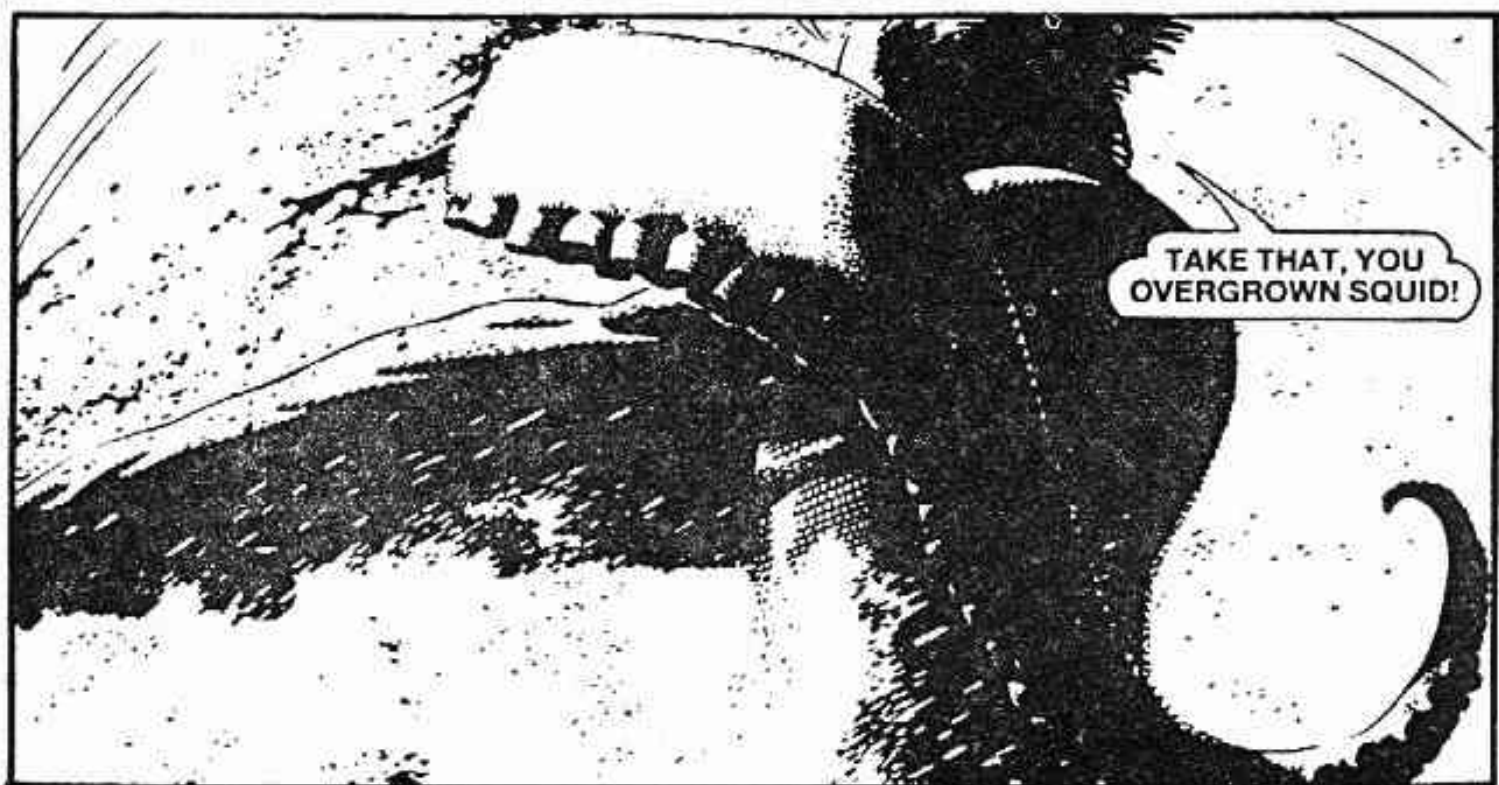
WHAT IS IT?



WE ARE DOOMED!

PAHI THERE IS NOT A  
LIVING THING THAT  
CANNOT BE SLAIN!








**THORDVIGE HACKED AT  
EACH OF THE CREATURE'S  
TENTACLES UNTIL AT LAST—**

**IT LOOSENS  
ITS GRIP!**

**WITH A THUNDEROUS  
ROAR AND AN  
AWESOME SURGE OF  
WATER, THE BEAST SLID  
BELOW THE SURFACE—**

THE SKY TURNED BLACK AND THE  
WIND TUGGED AT THE DAMAGED  
RIGGING.



MY GOD!  
NOW A STORM!

... AND WITH BROKEN SAILS ...

THE STORM WAS TERRIFYING—

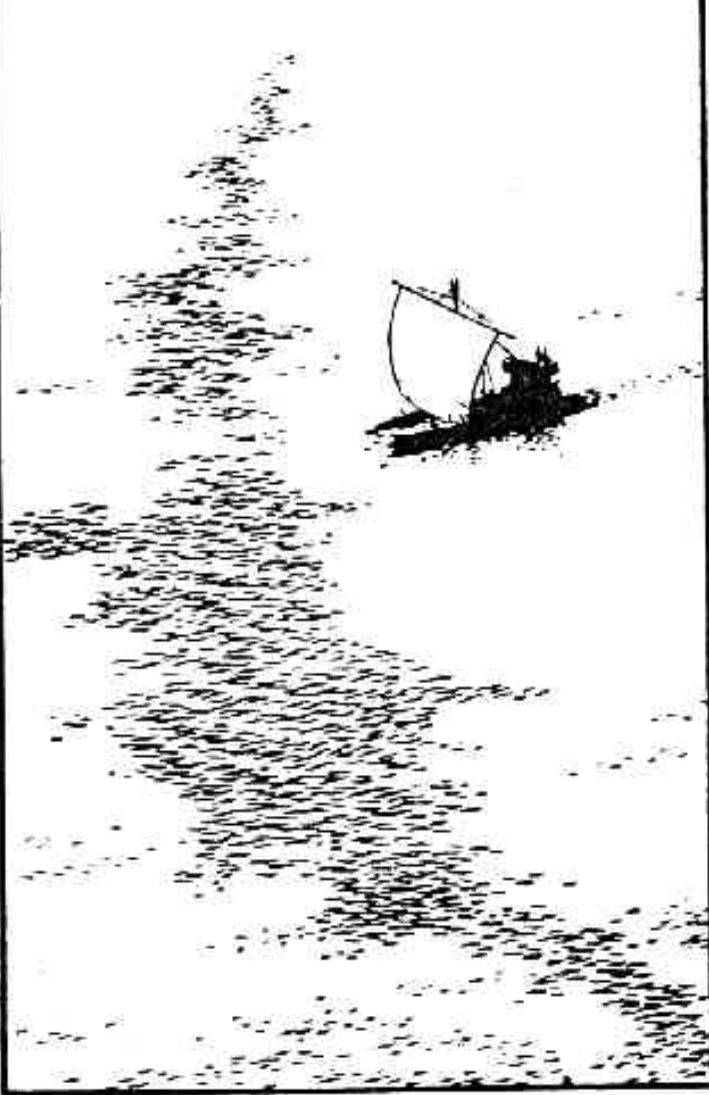


THIS IS NO ORDINARY  
STORM! IT HAS THE REEK  
OF MAGIC.

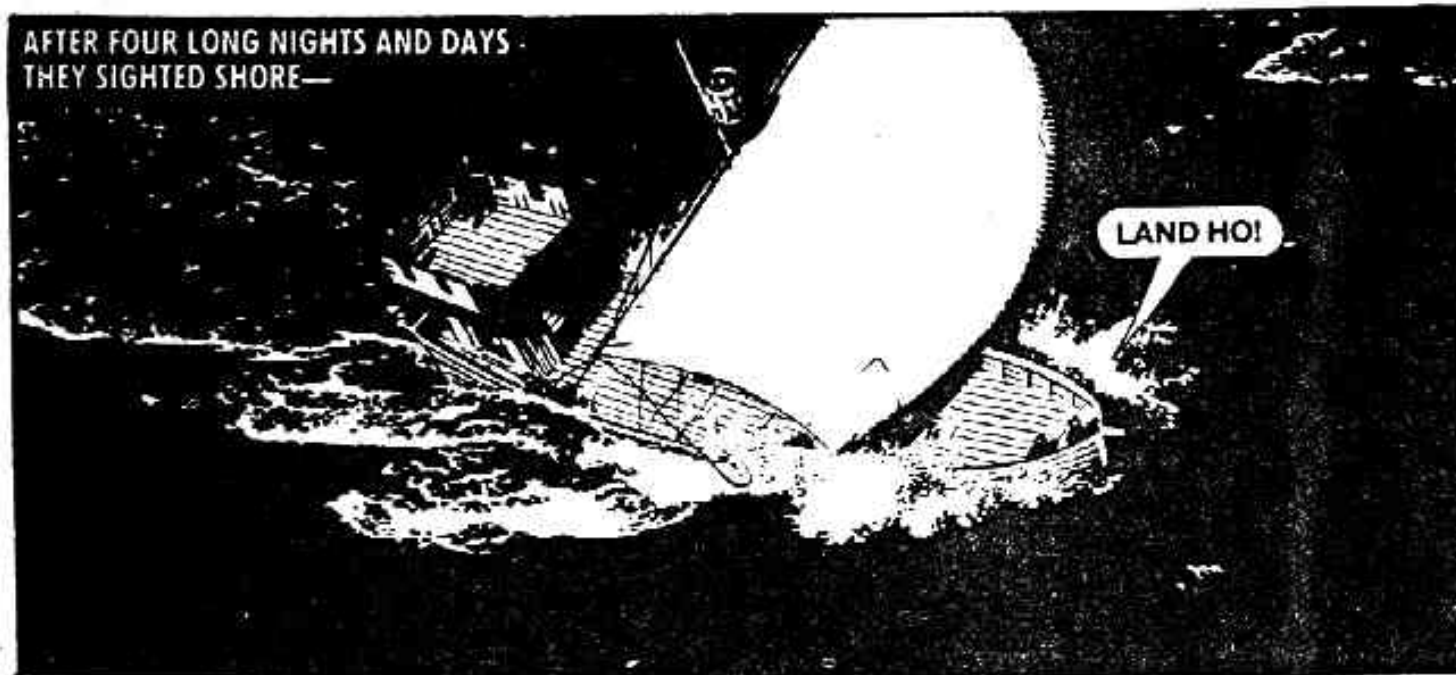
AS IF TO ANSWER HIM, THE SKY CRACKLED AND FLASHED WITH CELESTIAL ENERGY.



THE FOLLOWING CALM GAVE THEM TIME TO REPAIR THE RIGGING.



AFTER FOUR LONG NIGHTS AND DAYS  
THEY SIGHTED SHORE—



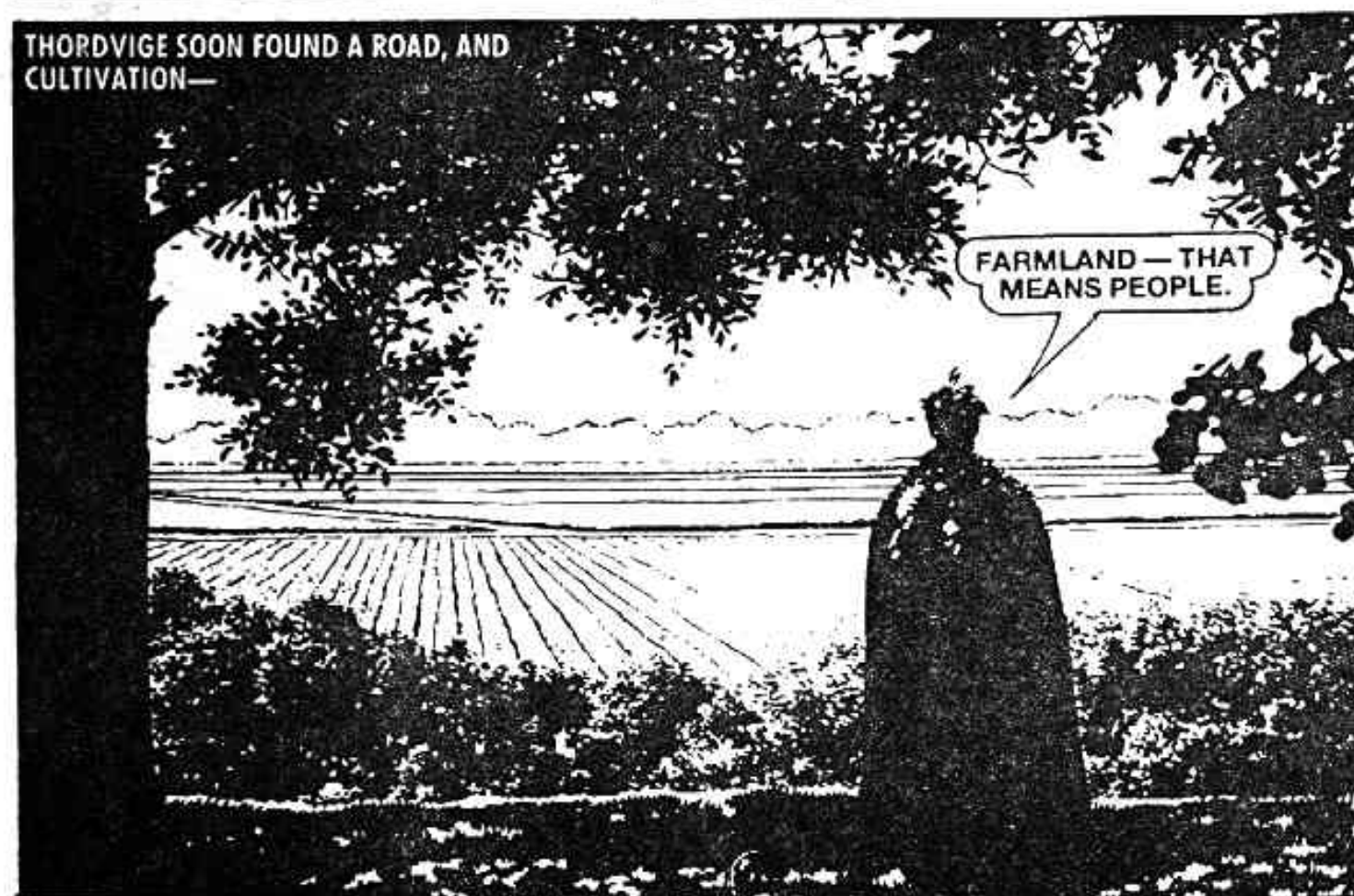








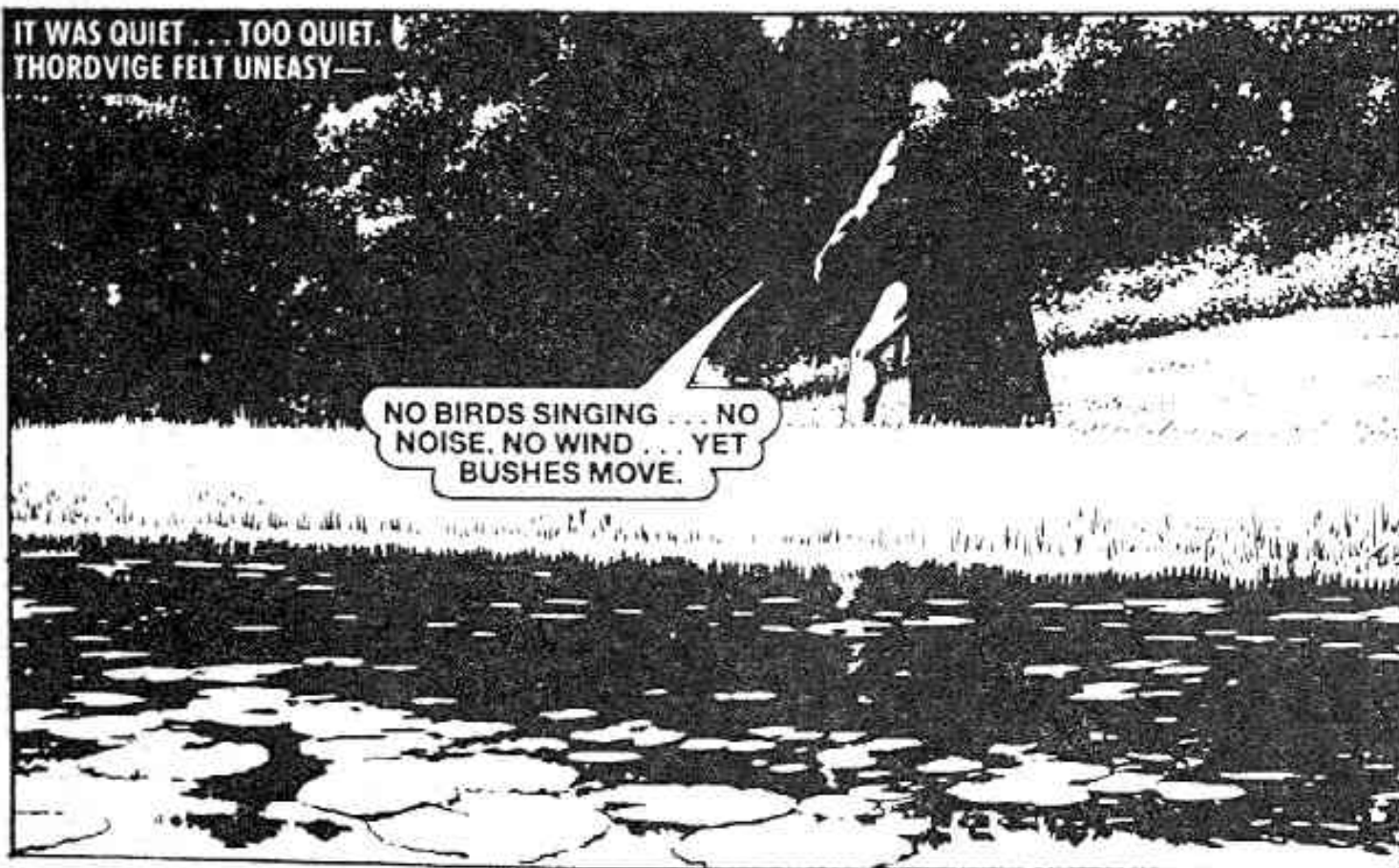
THORDVIGE SOON FOUND A ROAD, AND  
CULTIVATION—







IT WAS QUIET . . . TOO QUIET.  
THORDVIGE FELT UNEASY—





THE BUSHES PARTED AND THORDVIGE WAS CONFRONTED BY A BAND OF SOLDIERS WITH MURDER IN MIND.

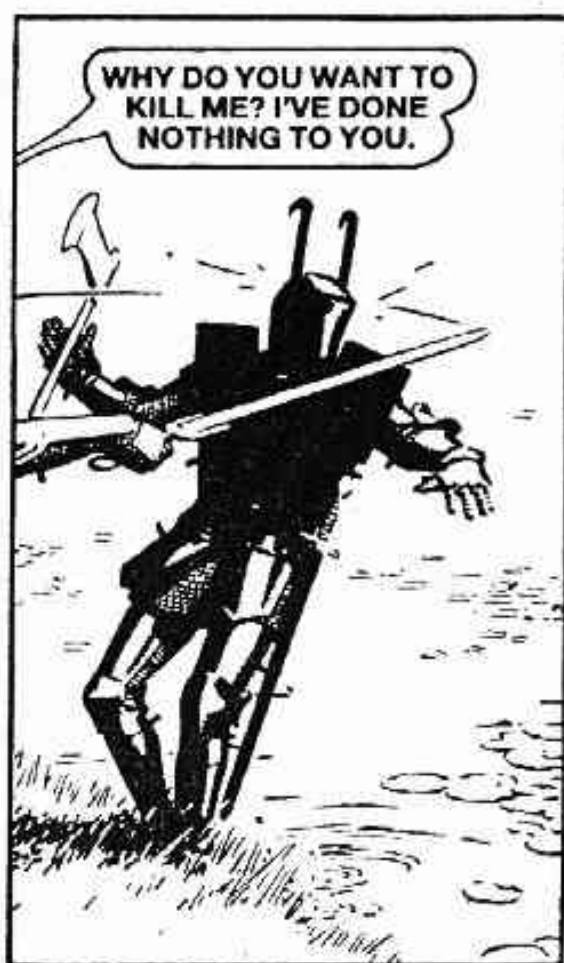
THOSE WOMEN SENT ME INTO A TRAP!



I DON'T DIE EASILY ... AND NOT BEFORE I GET ANSWERS.



WHY DO YOU WANT TO KILL ME? I'VE DONE NOTHING TO YOU.





**IN A COLD FURY THORDVIGE WENT TO  
WORK AT HIS OLD TRADE OF KILLING —**



**IN ALL THE YEARS OF THE WAR NONE HAD  
MATCHED HIS FIGHTING SKILLS.**

**COME HEAR MY SWORD SING  
ITS SONG OF DEATH.**



IN A FEW BRIEF MINUTES  
ONLY ONE WAS LEFT.

WHERE IS THE ABBEY? ..  
TELL ME, OR DIE!

I'LL TELL YOU.

TURN TO THE EAST AND  
HEAD FOR HIGH  
GROUND! IT STANDS ON  
THE HILL.

AYE ... YOU LOOK TO BE  
TELLING THE TRUTH! GO ...  
LEAVE ME!

THE ABBEY SAT ALONE, IN STARK  
SILENCE ON A HIGH POINT.

HERE IT IS ... ALL I HAVE TO  
DO IS GET THE CHALICE.

HE KNOCKED ON THE HEAVY OAK DOORS.

HOW CAN I HELP  
YOU, BROTHER?

I WANT TO SPEAK TO THE  
FATHER SUPERIOR.

AMID THE SCENT OF INCENSE HE WAITED. THEN—

WELCOME, BROTHER. WHAT  
BRINGS YOU TO THIS PLACE OF  
PEACE, SO FAR AWAY FROM THE  
BUSINESS OF THE WORLD?







THORDVIGE SWUNG HIS SWORD MENACINGLY—

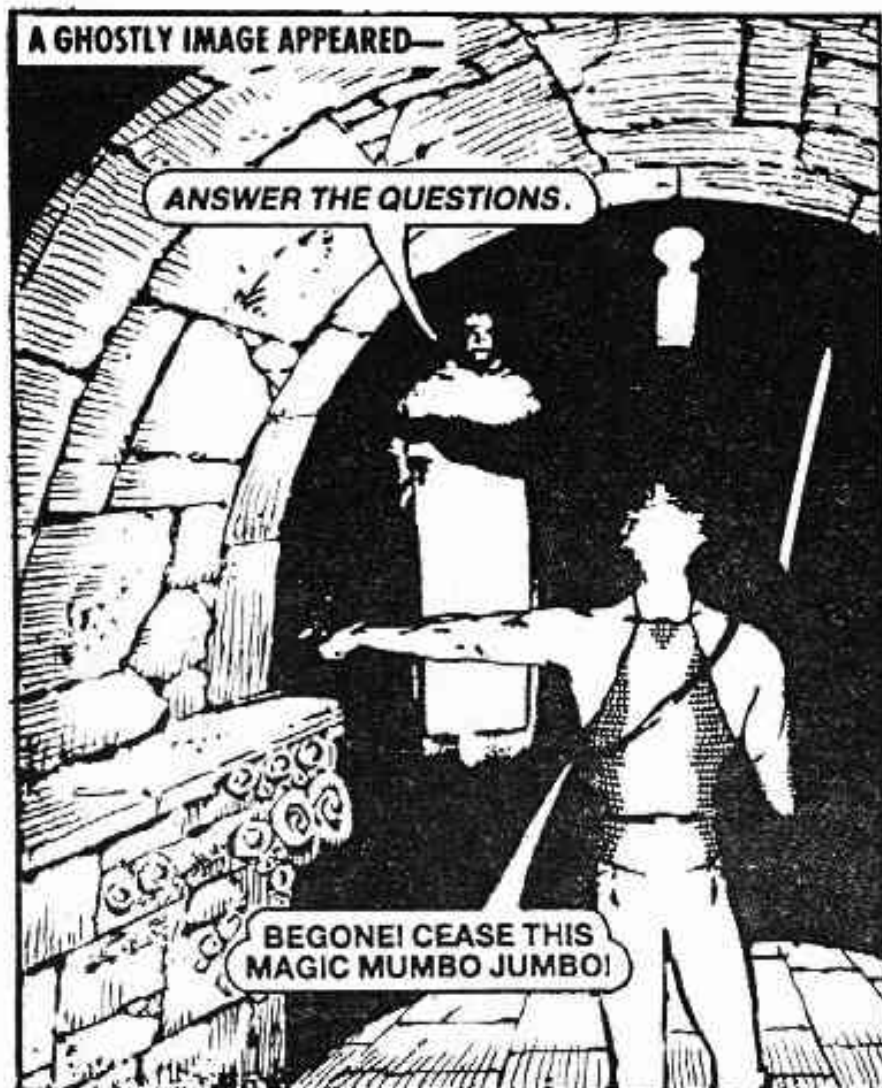
YOU MUST LEAVE ...  
NOOOOOO!


YOU CANNOT  
MAKE ME LEAVE!

SMOKE AND FLAME BILLOWED, TO BE  
FOLLOWED BY AN EERIE SILENCE AS THE  
MONKS DISAPPEARED.


GODS OF WAR!  
IT'S BLACK MAGIC!!

THEY'RE GONE! IT  
MAKES NO  
DIFFERENCE, I'LL FIND  
THE CHALICE.



A man with dark hair and a determined expression is shown from the waist up. He is wearing a dark, sleeveless tunic. He is holding a long, thin spear or staff with both hands, pointing it towards the right. The background is a dark, swirling, ethereal void with some lighter, wispy clouds on the left side.

DO NOT TRY TO CONFUSE  
ME WITH YOUR BABBLE.

A man with spiky hair and a stern expression is standing in a stone corridor. He is wearing a dark, sleeveless tunic with a circular emblem on the chest. He is holding a long, straight sword with both hands, pointing it towards the right. The corridor is made of rough-hewn stone blocks, and there is a large, arched opening in the background.


YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED. THIS IS  
YOUR LAST CHANCE TO LEAVE  
BEFORE THE WRATH OF THE GODS  
DESCENDS ON YOU!

FIGHTING AGAINST THE  
MADDENING VOICES,  
THORDVIGE ADVANCED TO  
THE END OF THE  
CORRIDOR...




... AND THERE WAS THE  
CHALICE.

CRAZY VOICES, THEY WERE  
DRIVING ME MAD! BUT  
THERE'S THE CHALICE!




PLEASE, MY SON... DO NOT  
REMOVE THE CHALICE. IT IS FOR  
THE PEACEFUL, AND YOU ARE A  
MAN OF WAR.

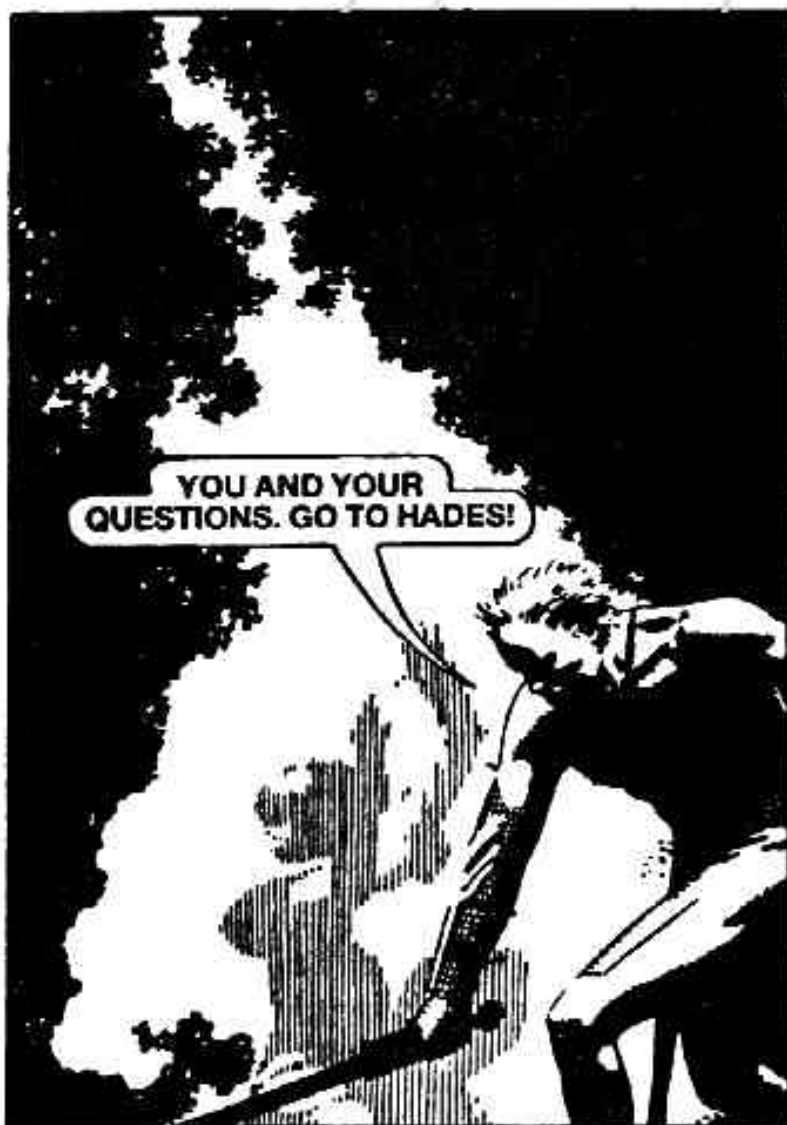
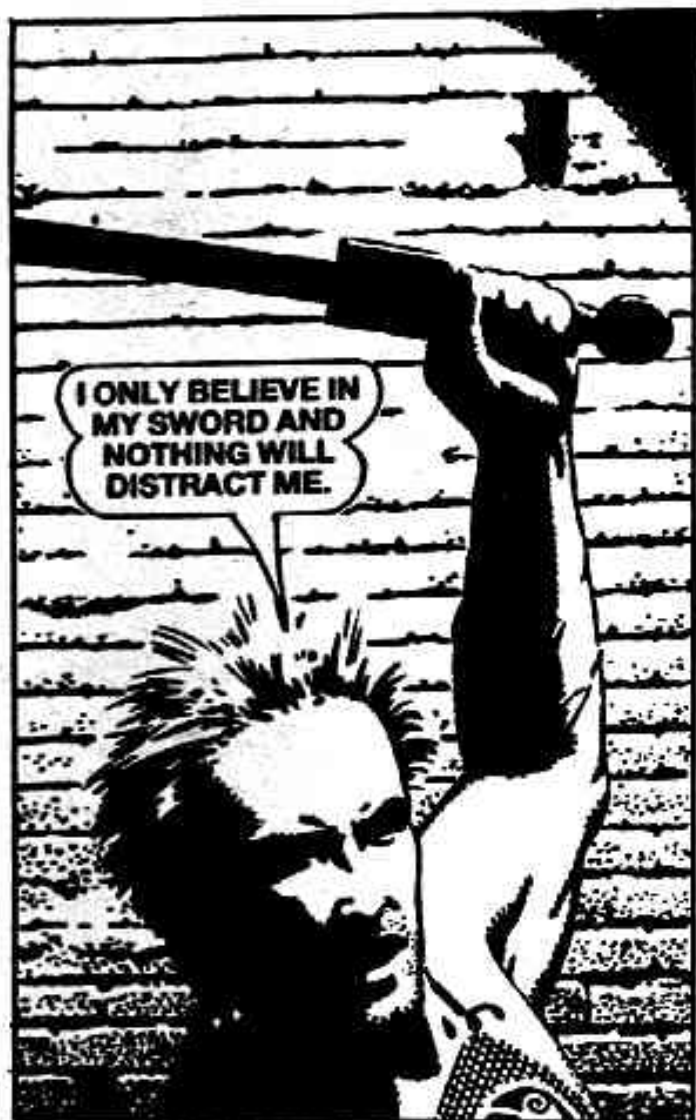
ANOTHER TALKER!  
ANOTHER DEAD MAN! OUT  
OF MY WAY, I'M IN A HURRY!



IF YOU BELIEVE IN THE  
GODS, GO EMPTY  
HANDED!








GOING BACK THROUGH THE  
CORRIDORS, THE VOICES WENT  
ON AND ON.

YOU HAVE RECEIVED YOUR  
FINAL WARNING. THE  
WRATH OF THE GODS  
SHALL REND YOU  
ASUNDER.






THE VOICES STOPPED, ONLY TO BE  
REPLACED BY A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.



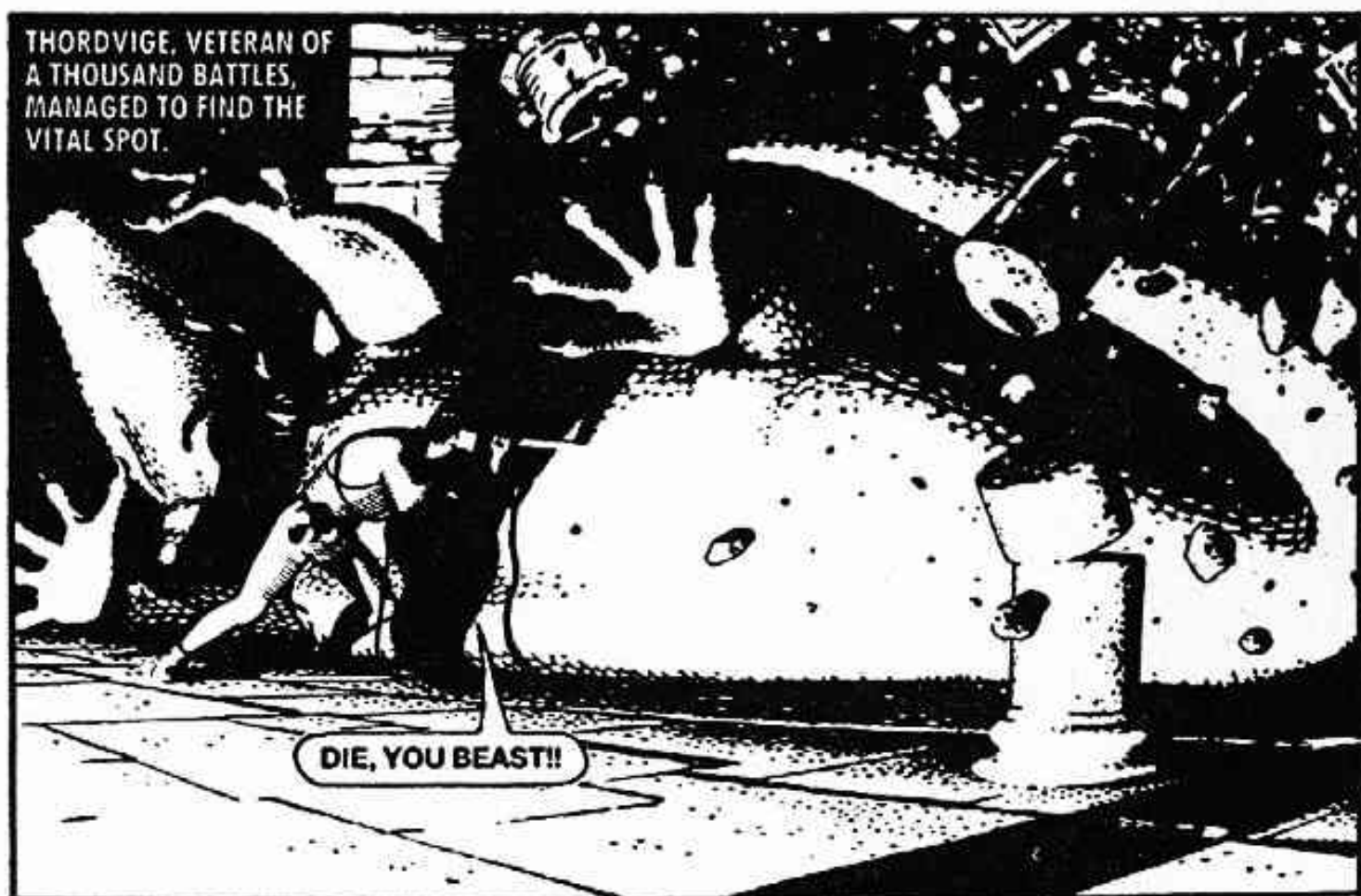
HELLO, THORDVIGE. I AM  
YSSE, PROTECTRESS OF THE  
CHALICE. AS WORDS COULD  
NOT STOP YOU, THEN  
SORCERY WILL!

THE WITCH TRANSFORMED HERSELF  
INTO A HUGE REPTILE. THORDVIGE HAD  
NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SO FANTASTIC.



BY ALL THE SAINTS!







THE MONSTER WAS CONQUERED.



BUT ANOTHER APPEARED.

I'LL CRUSH YOU!

BY THE GODS  
OF ICE...



THORDVIGE LOST HIS SWORD.



PREPARE TO DIE!

I'M LOST. NO! I STILL  
HAVE THE CHALICE —  
ITS POWERS . . . IF IT  
HAS ANY!



NO! NO! NOT THE SACRED  
CHALICE!!!



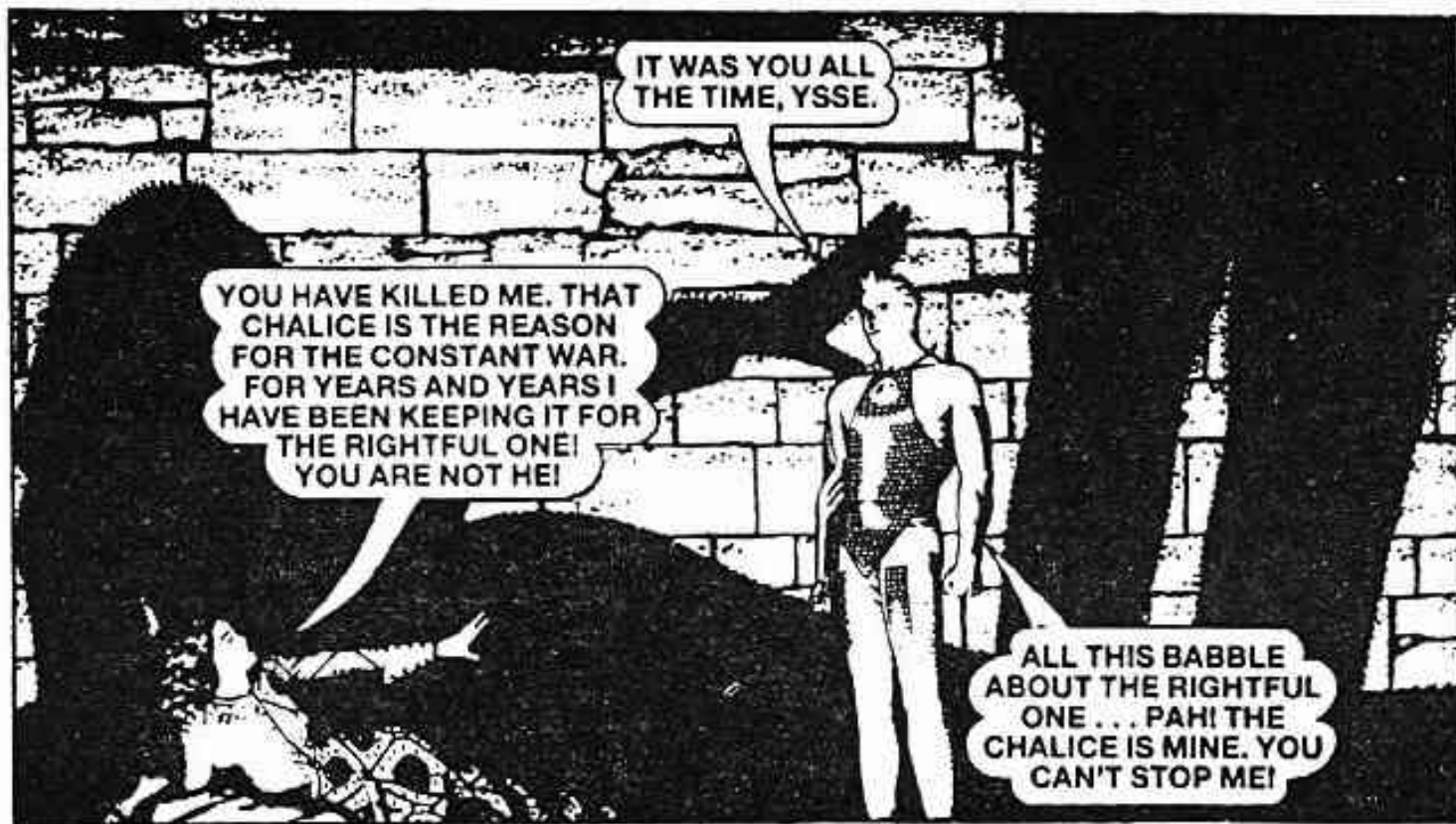
A NEW TRANSFORMATION TOOK PLACE. THIS TIME THORDVIGE SAW THE FACE OF THE CREATOR OF THE PREVIOUS HORRORS.



IT WAS YOU ALL  
THE TIME, YSSE.

YOU HAVE KILLED ME. THAT  
CHALICE IS THE REASON  
FOR THE CONSTANT WAR.  
FOR YEARS AND YEARS I  
HAVE BEEN KEEPING IT FOR  
THE RIGHTFUL ONE!  
YOU ARE NOT HE!

ALL THIS BABBLE  
ABOUT THE RIGHTFUL  
ONE... PAH! THE  
CHALICE IS MINE. YOU  
CAN'T STOP ME!







THE WITCH DISAPPEARED IN A PUFF OF  
CELESTIAL SMOKE.

YOU WIN AND  
I CURSE YOU!





THORVIGE LEFT THE ABBEY  
AND MADE HIS WAY BACK TO  
THE SHIP.

FREE OF THAT  
MADHOUSE AT LAST.



THE RETURN TRIP WAS FREE OF  
TROUBLE. IT SEEMED THE  
CHALICE WAS PROTECTING  
THEM.



THORDVIGE PAID THE CAPTAIN.

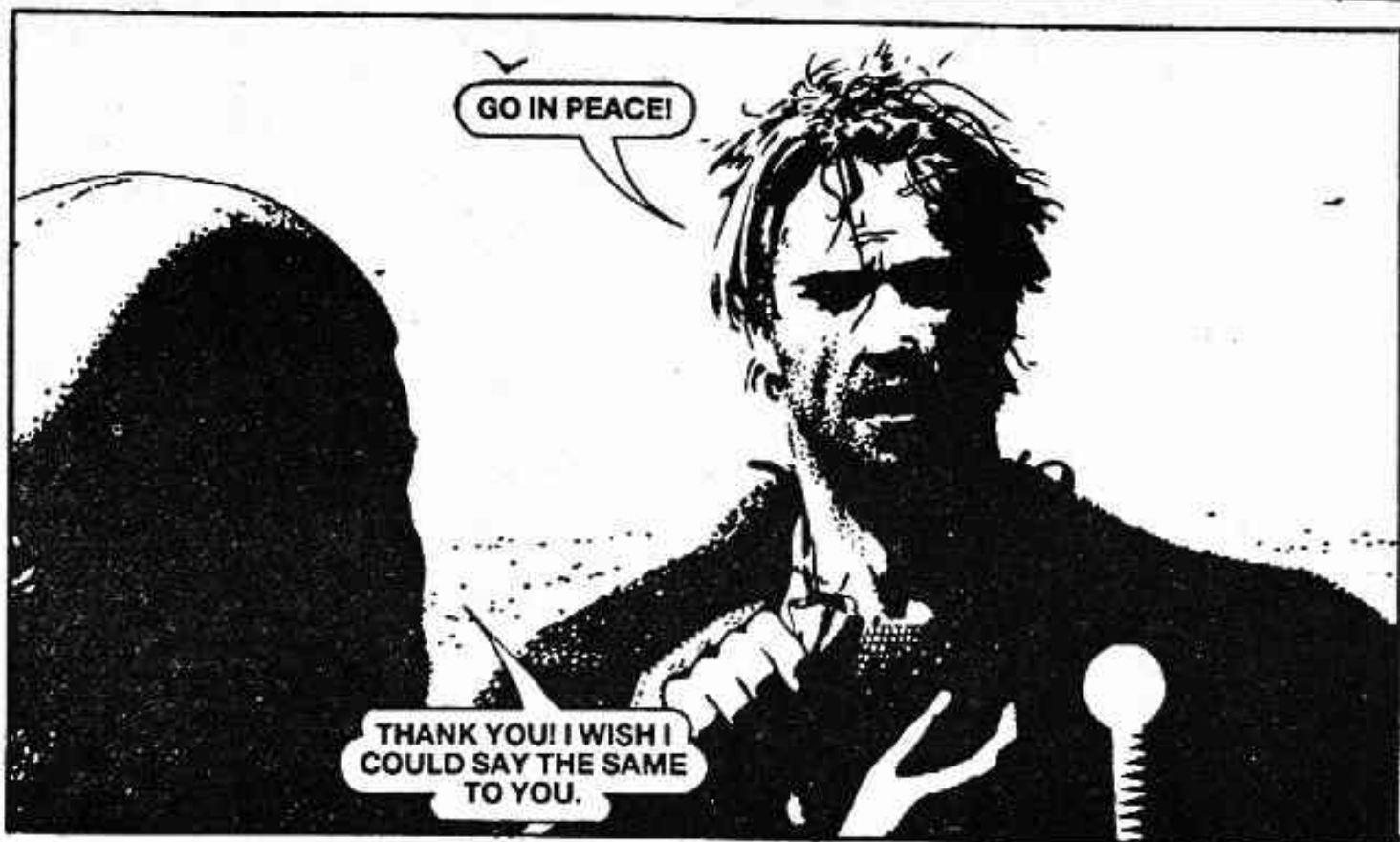
HERE IS YOUR MONEY.  
I AM GLAD THAT IS OVER.

ME AS WELL... I THINK I  
SHALL GIVE UP THE SEA.



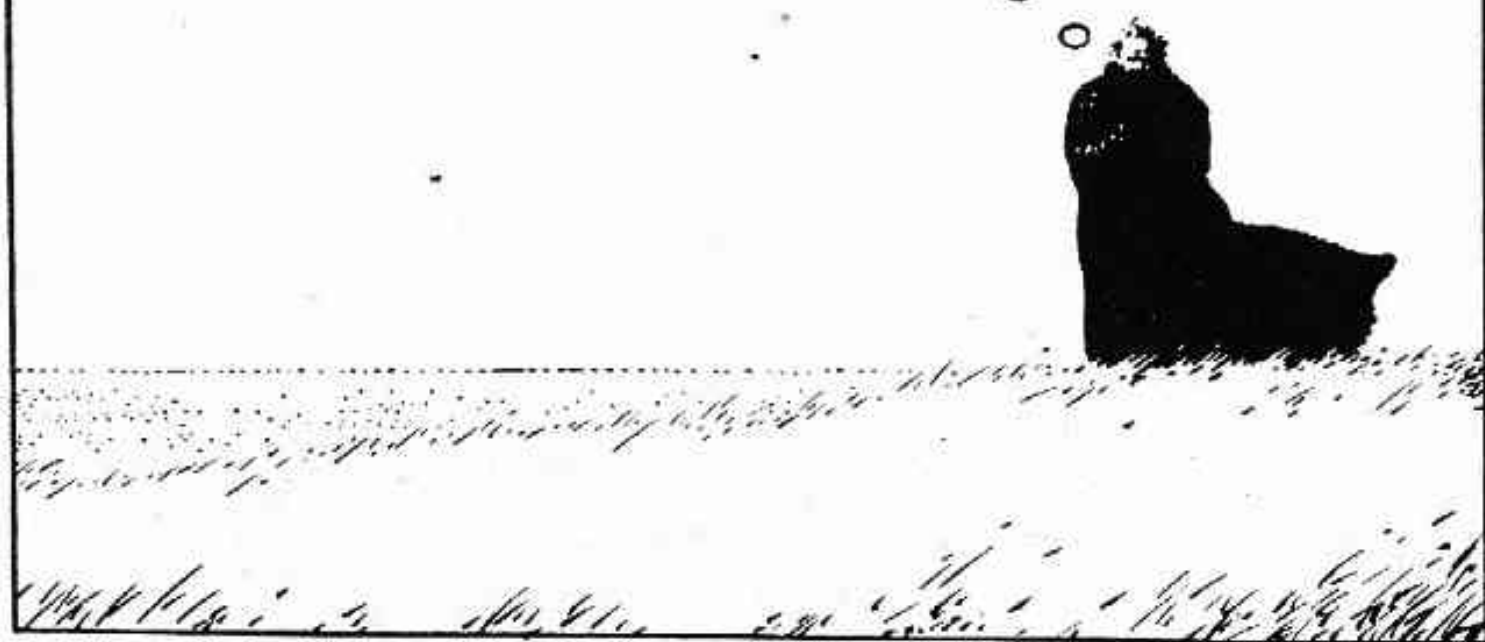
GO IN PEACE!

THANK YOU! I WISH I  
COULD SAY THE SAME  
TO YOU.



THORDVIGE SET OUT TO DELIVER THE CHALICE.

I'VE GOT THE FEELING THAT  
I AM NOT ALONE.



HE WASN'T!

I AM THE GRAND MASTER  
OF THE BLACK KNIGHTS  
AND I ASK YOU TO HAND  
OVER THE CHALICE.

WHY DO  
YOU WANT IT?







YOU ASK TOO MANY  
QUESTIONS! HOW MUCH  
WERE YOU PAID TO GET  
THE CHALICE?

500 GOLD COINS!



I OFFER YOU  
ALL I HAVE!

IF YOU CAN'T GIVE ME  
MORE THAN 500 GOLD  
COINS THEN I HAVE NO  
INTENTION OF HANDING IT  
OVER.

THEN I SHALL TAKE IT FROM  
YOUR DEAD HAND.

THE BLACK KNIGHT RAISED  
HIS AXE—

I HAVE THE ADVANTAGE!




YES... BUT NOT  
IF I UNSEAT YOU!



PICKING UP A STONE, THORDVIGE THREW  
IT WITH ALL HIS MIGHT. THE STONE  
KNOCKED THE GREAT MASTER OFF HIS  
HORSE.





NOW WE CAN FIGHT  
ON EQUAL TERMS.

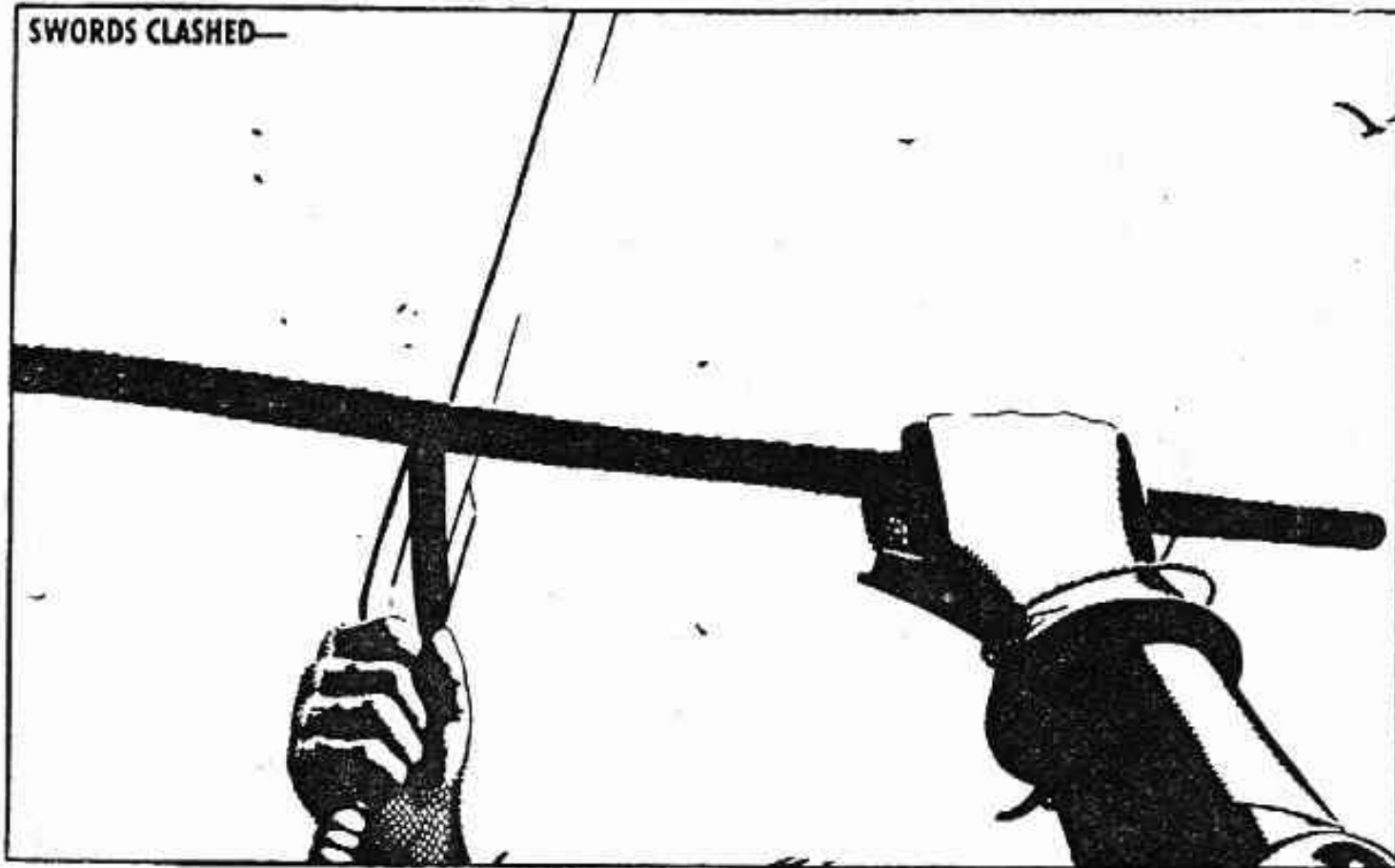


I HAVE NO LIKING FOR SUCH A  
BARGAIN . . . LOOK TO YOUR  
WEAPONS.

THE PRICE FOR NOT  
HANDING OVER THE  
CHALICE IS YOUR LIFE.



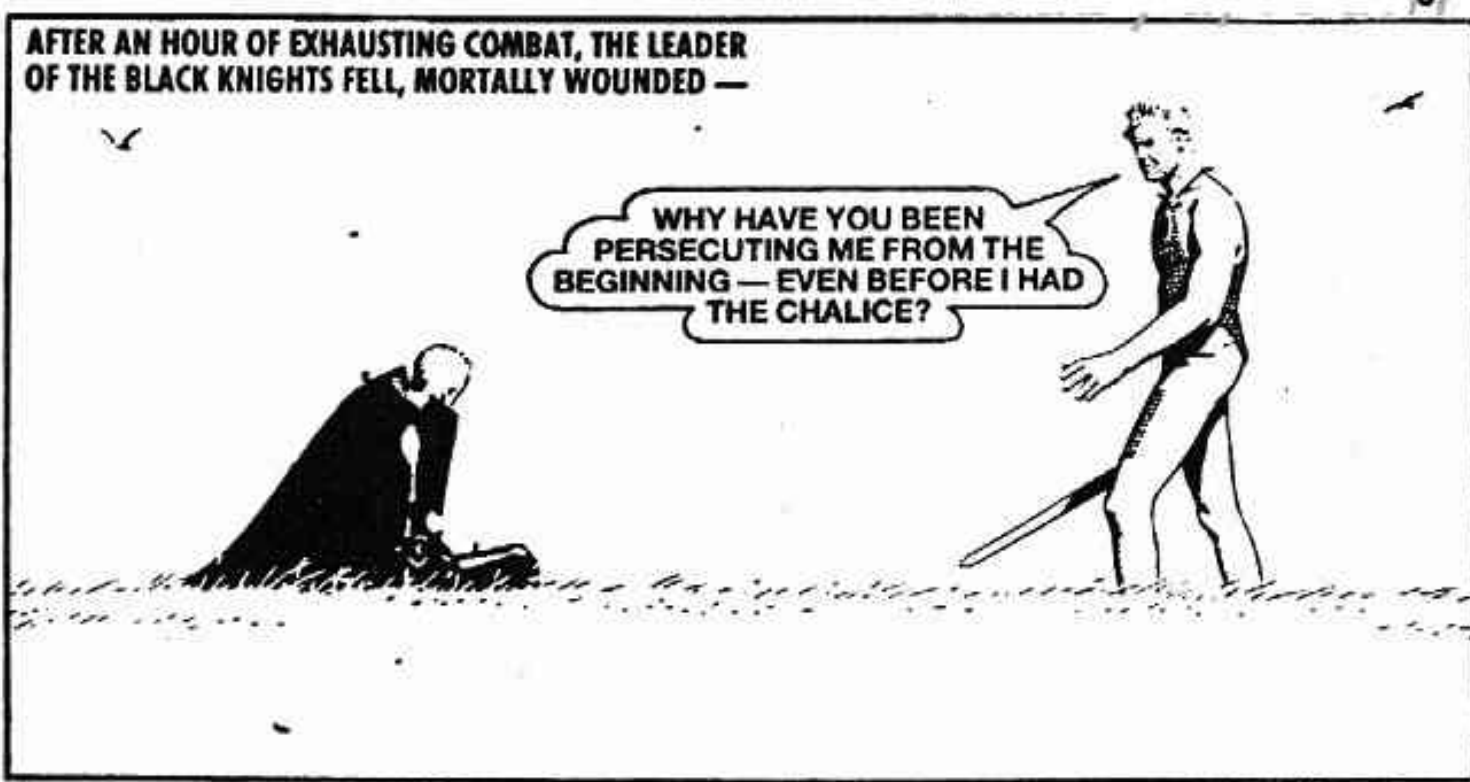
SWORDS CLASHED—




ARMOUR SPLIT—



AFTER AN HOUR OF EXHAUSTING COMBAT, THE LEADER OF THE BLACK KNIGHTS FELL, MORTALLY WOUNDED —




WHY HAVE YOU BEEN PERSECUTING ME FROM THE BEGINNING — EVEN BEFORE I HAD THE CHALICE?




THE ORACLE TOLD US THAT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WOULD BE SENT FOR THE CHALICE.

I AM THE LAST BLACK KNIGHT ... AND NOW I DIE!



THIRTY-FIVE GOLD COINS ... THAT IS ALL HE HAD. I'LL TAKE IT FOR MY TROUBLE.



A black and white comic panel showing a man from the chest up. He has dark, slightly messy hair and is wearing a dark tunic with a circular brooch at the collar. He is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression. A thought bubble is above him.

I HAVE MANY  
QUESTIONS, AND ONLY  
THE OLD MAN CAN  
ANSWER THEM.

MEMORIES OF OTHER TIMES  
CAME BACK TO HIM.



A black and white comic panel showing a group of people looking at the man from the first panel. The man is in the center, looking slightly to the right. He is wearing a dark tunic with a circular brooch. Several other people are visible around him, looking at him with interest. There are three speech bubbles.

YOU REALLY WANT  
TO BE A WARRIOR?

YOU MUST HAVE A  
GOOD SWORD!

WITHOUT THAT YOU  
WILL NEVER MAKE IT!



MORE MEMORIES FLOWED THROUGH HIS MIND.

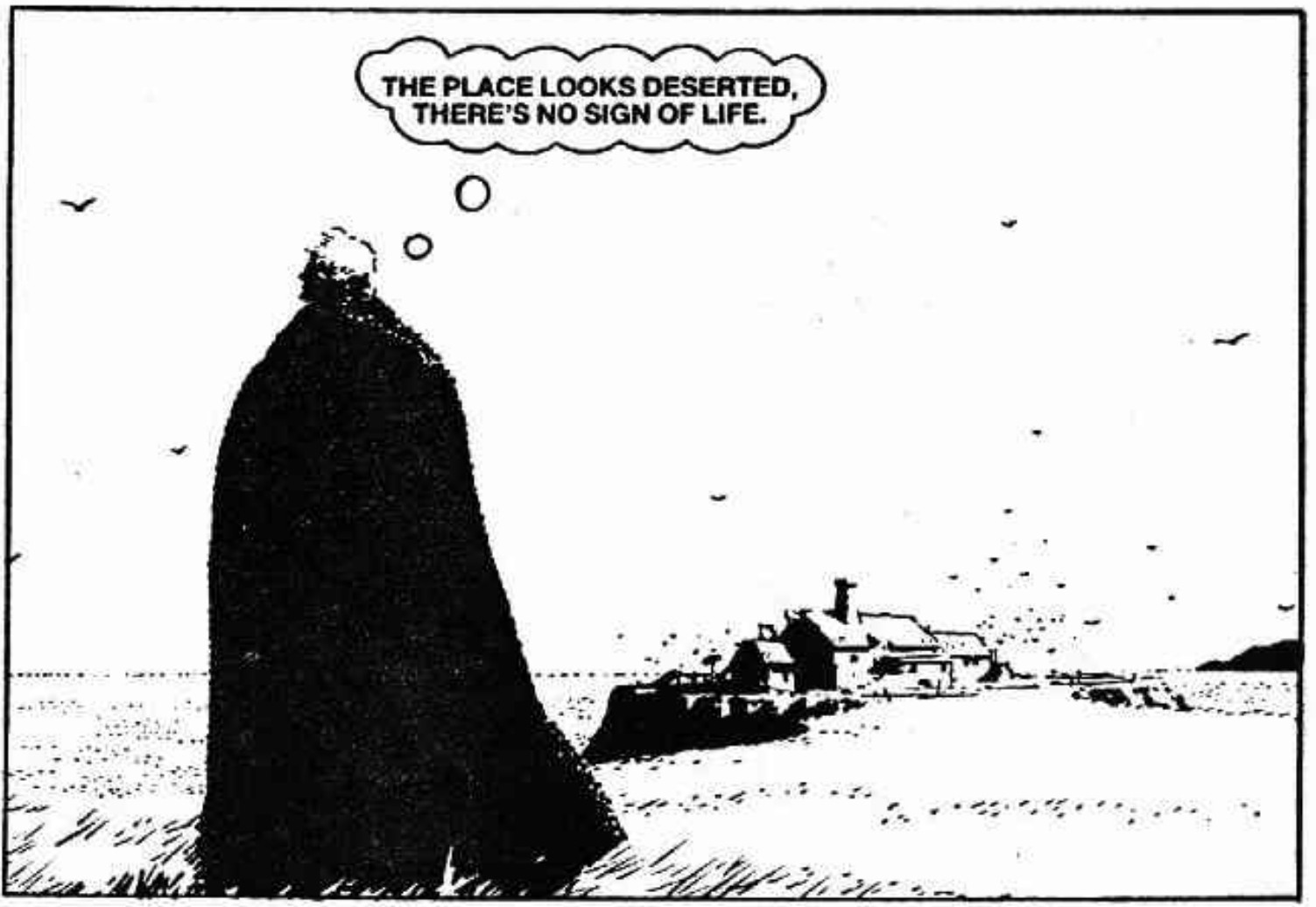
THERE YOU ARE!

YOU WON'T BE SORRY  
TO HAVE JOINED ME.  
THE LIFE OF THE  
WARRIOR IS THE BEST!

IT'S A GOOD SWORD,  
MY BOY. WITH IT YOU  
WILL BE INVINCIBLE!



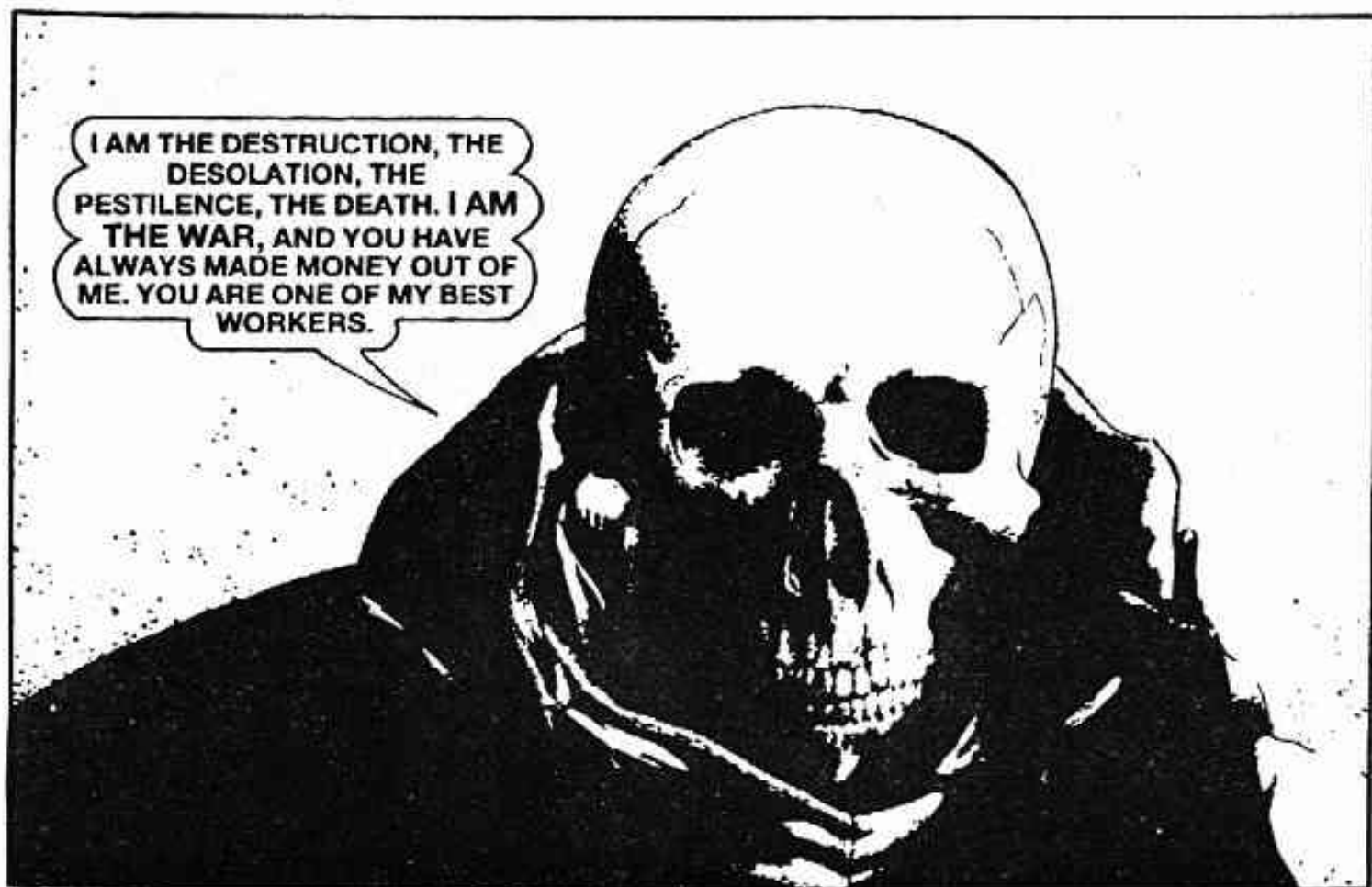
WHO IS THE  
OLD MAN?



THE PLACE LOOKS DESERTED,  
THERE'S NO SIGN OF LIFE.







BY THE GODS! YOU  
HAVE USED ME TO DO  
YOUR VILE DEEDS!

AS LONG AS THE CHALICE WAS  
SAFE THERE WAS THE CHANCE  
THAT THE RIGHTFUL ONE  
WOULD EMERGE AND END THE  
WAR. ENOUGH EXPLANATION!

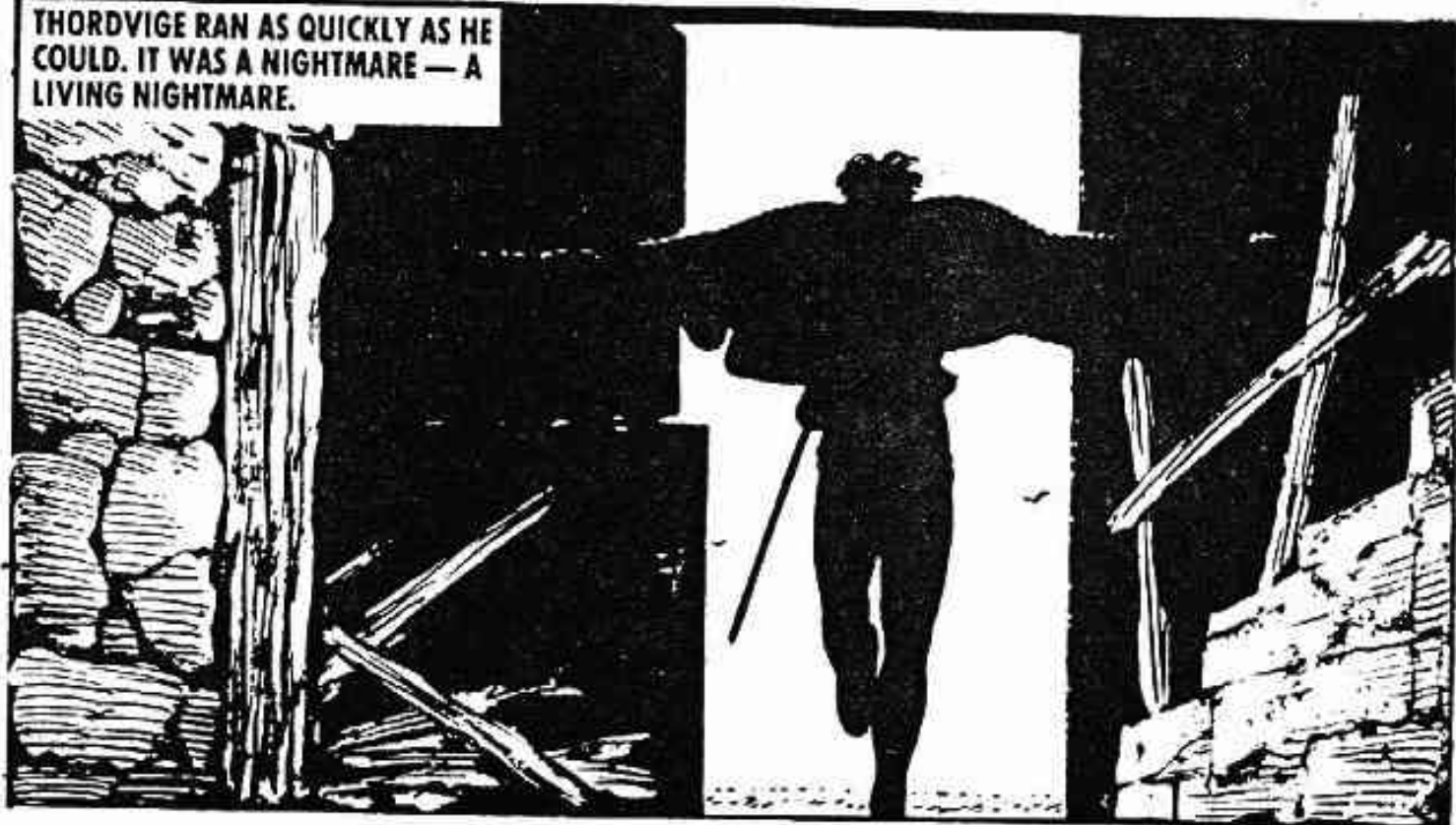
TAKE YOUR FIVE HUNDRED  
COINS AND ANOTHER  
HUNDRED MORE. THERE ARE  
NOT MANY PEOPLE WHO SEE  
MY FACE AND LIVE TO TELL  
THE TALE... BUT YOUR TIME  
HASN'T COME YET. GO  
QUICKLY!

THORDVIGE GRABBED THE BAGS—

WHAT HAVE I DONE? BY THE  
GODS OF HADES, WHAT  
HAVE I DONE?



THORDVIGE RAN AS QUICKLY AS HE  
COULD. IT WAS A NIGHTMARE — A  
LIVING NIGHTMARE.





THE CHALICE OF PEACE...



... THE UNEARTHLY HANDS PICKED UP THE CHALICE  
AND BONY FINGERS RIPPED IT APART—

FIRE OF HELL, MELT THIS  
METAL SO THAT WE MAY  
HAVE WAR FOREVER...



**THORDVIGE WAS A WEALTHY MAN.  
WITH SIX HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIVE  
GOLD COINS HE COULD LEAVE THE WAR  
BEHIND.**



**BUT WAR HAD NO INTENTION OF  
LEAVING HIM BEHIND.**



**DON'T  
MISS**

**THIS MONTH'S OTHER  
ACTION-PACKED  
ADVENTURE**



**NOW ON SALE**



# SONG OF THE SWORD

The reasons for the war had been forgotten. But reasons were not important now . . . only the fighting mattered. From this wholesale slaughter emerged a warrior so skilled in the art of killing that men would pay highly for his services. That man was Thordvige, a veteran of a thousand battles. But Thordvige was tiring of the relentless combat — all he wanted was to leave the war behind and settle in some still quiet corner of the ravaged land. To do that, he needed a fortune in gold . . . and when the opportunity arose to earn a king's ransom, he didn't question the rights and wrongs . . . his eyes saw only the pile of gold, and not the sea of troubles it might bring.

